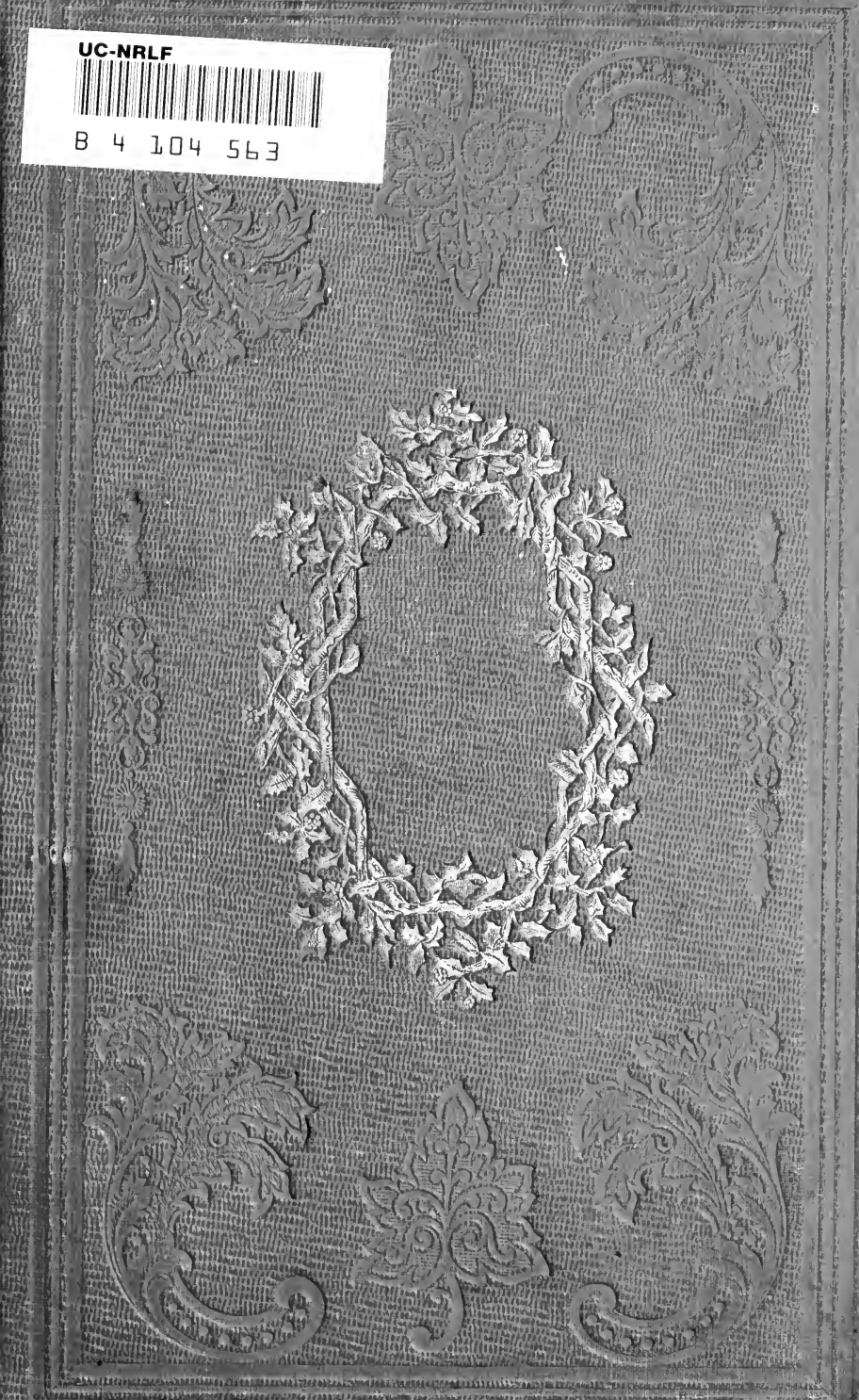
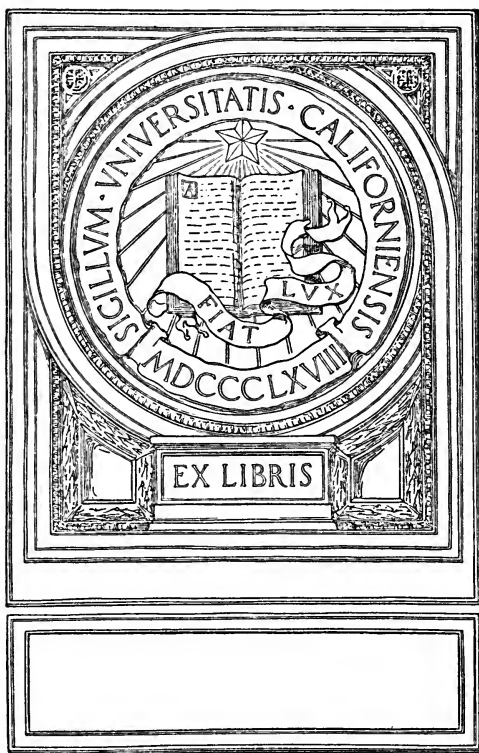


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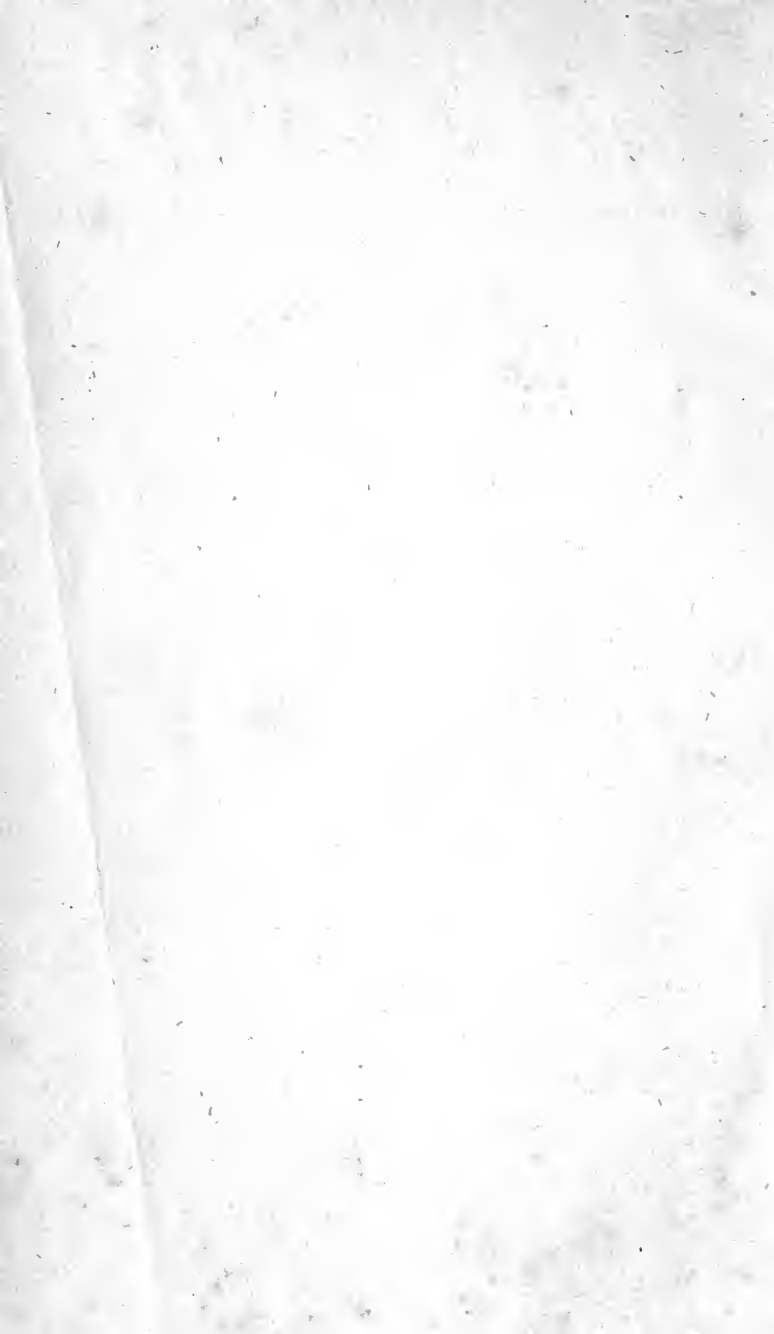


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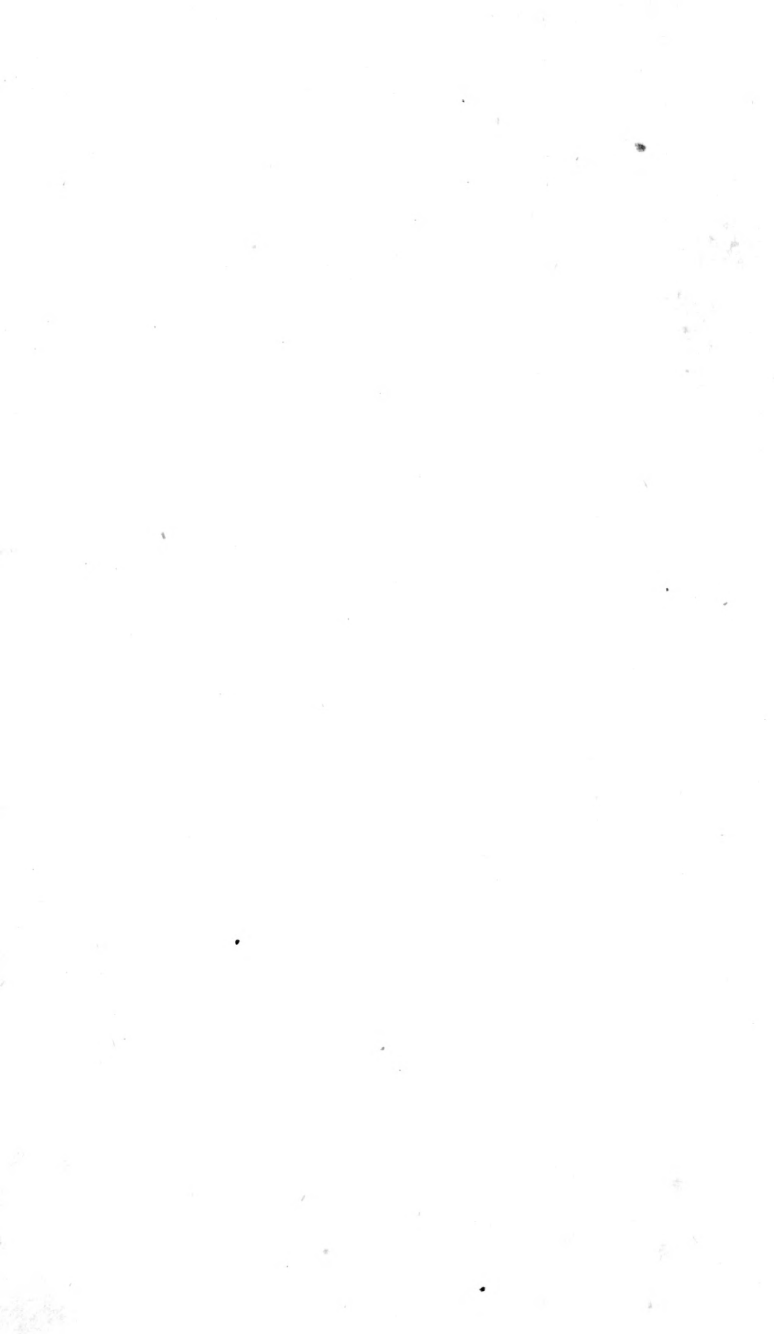
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LEAVES

FROM THE

BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE.



2000



LEAVES

FROM THE

BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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TO VIRGIL
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PREFACE.

WE turn, here, a few leaves in the great Book of Human Life. The writing thereon, though occasionally less grave than gay, is not without its lessons of wisdom. If, at any scene portrayed or any sentiment uttered, the reader should smile, we are sure it will not be at rude vulgarity, heartless wit, or the triumph of strength over weakness. While we offer, in these pages, a pleasant recreation for leisure hours, it is such a recreation as will, we trust, leave the mind active with good purposes and kindly sympathies.



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THE WIFE.

"I AM hopeless!" said the young man, in a voice that was painfully desponding. "Utterly hopeless! Heaven knows I have tried hard to get employment! But no one has need of my service. The pittance doled out by your father, and which comes with a sense of humiliation that is absolutely heart-crushing, is scarcely sufficient to provide this miserable abode, and keep hunger from our door. But for your sake, I would not touch a shilling of his money, if I starved."

"Hush, dear Edward!" returned the gentle girl, who had left father, mother, and a pleasant home, to share the lot of him she loved; and she laid a finger on his lips, while she drew her arm around him.

"Agnes," said the young man, "I cannot endure this life much longer. The native independence of my character revolts at our present condition. Months have elapsed, and yet the ability I possess finds no employment. In this country, every avenue is crowded."

The room in which they were overlooked the sea.

"But there is another land, where, if what we hear be true, ability finds employment and talent a sure reward." And, as Agnes said this, in a voice of encouragement, she pointed from the window toward the expanse of waters that stretched far away toward the south and west.

"America!" The word was uttered in a quick, earnest voice.

"Yes."

"Agnes, I thank you for this suggestion! Return to the pleasant home you left for one who cannot procure for

you even the plainest comforts of life, and I will cross the ocean to seek a better fortune in that land of promise. The separation, painful to both, will not, I trust, be long."

"Edward," replied the young wife, with enthusiasm, as she drew her arm more tightly about his neck, "I will never leave thee or forsake thee. Where thou goest I will go, and where thou diest I will die. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

"Would you forsake all," said Edward, in surprise, "and go far away with me into a strange land?"

"It will be no stranger to me than it will be to you, Edward."

"No, no, Agnes! I will not think of that," said Edward Marvel, in a positive voice. "If I go to that land of promise, it must first be alone."

"Alone!" A shadow fell over the face of Agnes. "Alone! It cannot—it must not be!"

"But think, Agnes. If I go alone, it will cost me but a small sum to live until I find some business, which may not be for weeks, or even months, after I arrive in the New World."

"What if you were to be sick?" The frame of Agnes slightly quivered as she made the suggestion.

"We will not think of that."

"I cannot help thinking of it, Edward. Therefore entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee. Where thou goest, I will go."

Marvel's countenance became more serious.

"Agnes," said the young man, after he had reflected for some time, "let us think no more about this. I cannot take you far away to this strange country. We will go back to London. Perhaps another trial there may be more successful."

After a feeble opposition on the part of Agnes, it was finally agreed that Edward should go once more to London, while she made a brief visit to her parents. If he found employment, she was to join him immediately; if not successful, they were then to talk further of the journey to America.

With painful reluctance, Agnes went back to her father's house, the door of which ever stood open to re-

ceive her; and she went back alone. The pride of her husband would not permit him to cross the threshold of a dwelling where his presence was not a welcome one. In eager suspense, she waited for a whole week ere a letter came from Edward. The tone of this letter was as cheerful and as hopeful as it was possible for the young man to write. But, as yet, he had found no employment. A week elapsed before another came. It opened in these words:—

“MY DEAR DEAR AGNES! Hopeless of doing any thing here, I have turned my thoughts once more to the land of promise; and when you receive this, I will be on my journey thitherward. Brief, very brief, I trust, will be our separation. The moment I obtain employment, I will send for you, and then our reunion will take place with a fulness of delight such as we have not yet experienced.”

Long, tender, and hopeful was the letter; but it brought a burden of grief and heart-sickness to the tender young creature, who felt almost as if she had been deserted by the one who was dear to her as her own life.

Only a few days had Edward Marvel been at sea, when he became seriously indisposed; and, for the remaining part of the voyage, was so ill as to be unable to rise from his berth. He had embarked in a packet ship from Liverpool bound for New York, where he arrived, at the expiration of five weeks. There he was removed to the sick wards of the hospital on Staten Island, and it was the opinion of the physicians there that he would die.

“Have you friends in this country?” inquired a nurse who was attending the young man. This question was asked on the day after he had become an inmate of the hospital.

“None,” was the feebly uttered reply.

“You are very ill,” said the nurse.

The sick man looked anxiously into the face of his attendant.

“You have friends in England?”

“Yes.”

“Have you any communication to make to them?”

Marvel closed his eyes, and remained for some time silent.

"If you will get me a pen and some paper, I will write a few lines," said he, at length.

"I'm afraid you are too weak for the effort," replied the nurse.

"Let me try," was briefly answered.

The attendant left the room.

"Is there any one in your part of the house named Marvel?" asked a physician, meeting the nurse soon after she had left the sick man's room. "There's a young woman down in the office inquiring for a person of that name."

"Marvel—Marvel?" The nurse shook her head.

"Are you certain?" remarked the physician.

"I'm certain there is no one by that name for whom any here would make inquiries. There's a young Englishman who came over in the last packet, whose name is something like that you mention. But he has no friends in this country."

The physician passed on, without further remark.

Soon after, the nurse returned to Marvel with the writing materials for which he had asked. She drew a table to the side of his bed, and supported him as he leaned over and tried, with an unsteady hand, to write.

"Have you a wife at home?" asked the nurse; her eyes had rested on the first words he wrote.

"Yes," sighed the young man, as the pen dropped from his fingers, and he leaned back heavily, exhausted by even the slight effort he had made.

"Your name is Marvel?"

"Yes."

"A young woman was here just now inquiring if we had a patient by that name."

"By my name?" There was a slight indication of surprise.

"Yes."

Marvel closed his eyes, and did not speak for some moments.

"Did you see her?" he asked at length, evincing some interest.

"Yes."

"Did she find the one for whom she was seeking?"

"There is no person here, except yourself, whose name came near to the one she mentioned. As you said you had no friends in this country, we did not suppose that you were meant."

"No, no." And the sick man shook his head slowly. "There is none to ask for me." "Did you say it was a young woman?" he inquired, soon after. His mind dwelt on the occurrence.

"Yes. A young woman with a fair complexion and deep blue eyes."

Marvel looked up quickly into the face of the attendant, while a flush came into his cheeks.

"She was a slender young girl, with light hair, and her face was pale, as from trouble."

"Agnes! Agnes!" exclaimed Marvel, rising up. "But no, no," he added, mournfully, sinking back again upon the bed; "that cannot be. I left her far away over the wide ocean."

"Will you write?" said the nurse, after some moments.

The invalid, without unclosing his eyes, slowly shook his head. A little while the attendant lingered in his room, and then retired.

"Dear, dear Agnes!" murmured Edward Marvel, closing his eyes, and letting his thoughts go, swift-winged, across the billowy sea. "Shall I never look on your sweet face again? Never feel your light arms about my neck, or your breath warm on my cheek? Oh, that I had never left you! Heaven give thee strength to bear the trouble in store!"

For many minutes he lay, thus alone, with his eyes closed, in sad self-communion. Then he heard the door open and close softly; but he did not look up. His thoughts were far, far away. Light feet approached quickly; but he scarcely heeded them. A form bent over him; but his eyes remained shut, nor did he open them until warm lips were pressed against his own, and a low voice, thrilling through his whole being, said—

"Edward!"

"Agnes!" was his quick response, while his arms were

thrown eagerly around the neck of his wife. "Agnes! Agnes! Have I awakened from a fearful dream?"

Yes, it was indeed her of whom he had been thinking. The moment she received his letter, informing her that he had left for the United States, she resolved to follow him in the next steamer that sailed. This purpose she immediately avowed to her parents. At first, they would not listen to her; but, finding that she would, most probably, elude their vigilance, and get away in spite of all efforts to prevent her, they deemed it more wise and prudent to provide her with every thing necessary for the voyage, and to place her in the care of the captain of the steamship in which she was to go. In New York they had friends, to whom they gave her letters fully explanatory of her mission, and earnestly commending her to their care and protection.

Two weeks before the ship in which Edward Marvel sailed reached her destination, Agnes was in New York. Before her departure, she had sought, but in vain, to discover the name of the vessel in which her husband had embarked. On arriving in the New World, she was therefore uncertain whether he had preceded her in a steamer, or was still lingering on the way.

The friends to whom Agnes brought letters received her with great kindness, and gave her all the advice and assistance needed under the circumstances. But two weeks went by without a word of intelligence on the one subject that absorbed all her thoughts. Sadly was her health beginning to suffer. Sunken eyes and pale cheeks attested the weight of suffering that was on her.

One day it was announced that a Liverpool packet had arrived with the ship fever on board, and that several of the passengers had been removed to the hospital.

A thrill of fear went through the heart of the anxious wife. It was soon ascertained that Marvel had been a passenger on board of this vessel; but, from some cause, nothing in regard to him beyond this fact could she learn. Against all persuasion, she started for the hospital, her heart oppressed with a fearful presentiment that he was either dead or struggling in the grasp of a fatal malady. On making inquiry at the hospital, she was told the one

she sought was not there, and she was about returning to the city when the truth reached her ears.

"Is he very ill?" she asked, struggling to compose herself.

"Yes, he is extremely ill," was the reply. "And it might not be well for you, under the circumstances, to see him at present."

"Not well for his wife to see him?" returned Agnes. Tears sprung to her eyes at the thought of not being permitted to come near in his extremity. "Do not say that. Oh, take me to him! I will save his life."

"You must be very calm," said the nurse; for it was with her she was talking. "The least excitement may be fatal."

"Oh, I will be calm and prudent." Yet, even while she spoke, her frame quivered with excitement.

But she controlled herself when the moment of meeting came, and, though her unexpected appearance produced a shock, it was salutary rather than injurious.

"My dear, dear Agnes!" said Edward Marvel, a month from this time, as they sat alone in the chamber of a pleasant house in New York, "I owe you my life. But for your prompt resolution to follow me across the sea, I would, in all probability, now be sleeping the sleep of death. Oh, what would I not suffer for your sake!"

As Marvel uttered the last sentence, a troubled expression flitted over his countenance. Agnes gazed tenderly into his face, and asked—

"Why this look of doubt and anxiety?"

"Need I answer the question?" returned the young man. "It is, thus far, no better with me than when we left our old home. Though health is coming back through every fibre, and my heart is filled with an eager desire to relieve these kind friends of the burden of our support, yet no prospect opens."

No cloud came stealing darkly over the face of the young wife. The sunshine, so far from being dimmed, was brighter.

"Let not your heart be troubled," said she, with a beautiful smile. "All will come out right."

"Right, Agnes? It is not right for me thus to depend on strangers."

"You need depend but a little while longer. I have already made warm friends here, and, through them, secured for you employment. A good place awaits you so soon as strength to fill it comes back to your weakened frame."

"Angel!" exclaimed the young man, overcome with emotion at so unexpected a declaration.

"No, not an angel," calmly replied Agnes, "only a wife. And now, dear Edward," she added, "never again, in any extremity, think for a moment of meeting trials or enduring privations alone. Having taken a wife, you cannot move safely on your journey unless she moves by your side."

"Angel! Yes, you are my good angel," repeated Edward.

"Call me what you will," said Agnes, with a sweet smile, as she brushed, with her delicate hand, the hair from his temples; "but let me be your wife. I ask no better name, no higher station."

[illegible]



THE DEAD DOVE.

"It is only a bird, Ada," said the young lover of the gentle girl; "why should you grieve over its death?"

"If the song sparrow had died, or the little wren, or even the robin," replied Ada, sadly, "my heart would not have felt the pain that now oppresses it; but to look upon a dead dove touches my feelings deeply."

"But why should you feel more pain because a dove has died? Its life is the same as the life of a robin, a sparrow, or a wren."

"No, not the same, Henry."

"Wherein lies the difference?"

"Are not their bodies different?"

"Oh yes."

"It is because their lives are different that their bodies vary in appearance: each is a form of affection; the sparrow of one affection, and the dove of another. And this is the reason why, in looking upon one, we are affected differently from what we are when we look at another."

"A strange doctrine, Ada, is it not?"

"Oh no. What makes the wolf differ from the lamb? Is it not his affection, of which his body is the repulsive form? The wolf is embodied cruelty, and the lamb is embodied innocence. And how good is our all-wise and merciful Creator in thus placing before our eyes, in this world, embodied affections, that we may the more fully understand their evil or good qualities! When we look upon a cruel beast, we have a more perfect idea of the direful nature of those affections in our hearts which originate in self-love; and when we look at an innocent

lamb, or a gentle dove, we perceive the beauty of good affections."

"Yours is a beautiful theory, Ada; and, if true, how full of life! With what new eyes would I look around me on the visible forms of nature, if I could believe as you believe."

"I cannot believe otherwise," said Ada, as she lifted her eyes from the bird in her hand, and looked tenderly at her lover.

"And this dove—to what affection does it correspond, and why are you so deeply touched by its death?"

"Need you ask, Henry? Is it not the embodied form of a pure, confiding love—such love as only a woman's heart can feel? And do you wonder that I am pained to see the death of such a love? Can I help thinking of woman's trusting heart betrayed?—of affection trampled out under the foot of neglect and wrong?" And tears came into the eyes of the pure-hearted girl.

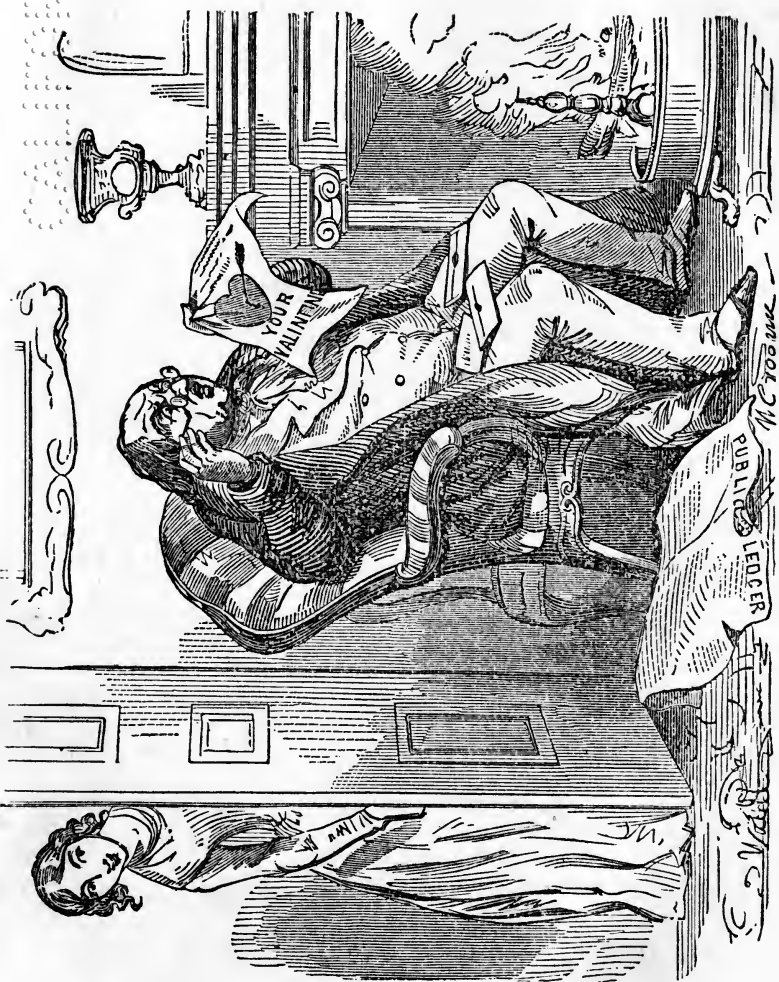
"Dear Ada!" said the young man, earnestly, "why will you let such painful thoughts come into your mind? They have no business there: your heart will never know betrayal; your affection will never be trampled out under the crushing foot of neglect."

"I did not think of myself," returned Ada, quickly; "I thought only of others."

The young man pressed his lips to hers, and then their eyes drooped from each other's, and rested upon the form of the dead dove.

"Never shall her heart feel the pangs of neglect; never, no, never!" said the lover, in earnest self-communion.

May his words prove a true prophecy; and if, in after life, his heart swerve, even for an instant, from its affection, may the form of the dead dove present itself, and warn him of the ruin his infidelity would occasion!



UNCLE BASIL'S VALENTINE.

UNCLE BASIL; dear old man! It's a shame for me to play off my tricks upon him. But it seems as if I couldn't help it, sometimes. He's such a fine "subject,"—so earnest-hearted, so strangely literal and simple-minded for a man who has passed along through the world of business, and gained the ripe age of three score and five years.

Dear old man! Well may I say that; for he has been to me, since the light of my fifth summer shone upon my head, in the place of father, mother and friend. And do I not love him? How warmly my heart responds to the question!

And yet, for all, I can't help teasing him, now and then. The fun is in me, and must come out.

"Hetty," said he, looking up from his newspaper one evening—he has such a passion for newspapers—"Hetty, I suppose you know that Valentine's day is but a week off."

"Valentine's day!" The remark was so abrupt, and said in such a meaning tone, that, in spite of me, I couldn't keep the blood from mounting to my face. I had no cause for blushes, and yet the blushes came.

"Yes, Valentine's day! What is the matter with the girl? Aha!"

I blushed deeper still. How vexed I was. There was no cause for blushes. This, to thee, reader, upon honour! "No lover, then?" On the word of a maiden of seventeen, no! *You* are convinced, of course.

"Aha! my little lady! what does all this mean?"

And uncle Basil fixed his eyes keenly upon me.

My face was now like scarlet. Finding all efforts to regain self-possession fruitless, I sprang from my chair and left the room.

For very vexation I cried on entering my chamber.

"Never mind! you'll pay for this," said I, after my heart beat calmly again. "You'll pay for this, my dear, good old bachelor uncle! Valentine's day, is it? Very well."

I punished the old gentleman by not letting him see the light of my countenance again until the next morning at breakfast. Then I was all smiles, and in perfect self-possession. He seemed to have forgotten the little incident of the previous evening, but I had not.

On that very day, I went out and selected a valentine. It had on it a great red heart, pierced by an arrow from Cupid's quiver. Two whole hours were spent in composing suitable verses to grace the love missive, which I laid carefully by until the thirteenth of February, when it was committed to post-office guardianship, directed to "Basil Jones, Esq."

On the next morning, as we sat at breakfast, Uncle Basil looked at me archly and said—

"Has that valentine come yet?"

I wanted to blush, but couldn't. I tried to look confused, but my countenance would not play hypocrite. I was too merry at heart.

Our meal ended, the old gentleman retired to the sitting-room, to read the morning papers, and wait for John, who had gone, as usual, to the post-office, to return with his letters. It seemed to me that John staid a long while. At last I heard him enter, and listened to his steps as he made his way to my uncle's apartment. As soon as he withdrew, I went, on tip-toe, to the door of the room, which happened to be left ajar. Noiselessly pushing it open, I had a full view of uncle Basil. He had already unsealed his love-letter, and was gazing in ludicrous bewilderment and astonishment upon its emblematic devices and "tender lines."

"Why, uncle Basil!" I exclaimed, in a tone of affected surprise, bursting suddenly in upon him, and snatching

the letter from his hand. "What is the meaning of this? A valentine, as I live! Uncle Basil! Who would have thought it? And at your age, too! Fie!"

As I live, the dear old man blushed almost as deeply as I had done a few evenings before, and looked so ashamed and confused, that I half repented of what I had done.

"Come, come, you saucy jade!" he said, partially recovering himself, and reaching out his hand. "Give me that letter."

"Letter, indeed! I call this a valentine." And I held it high above my head. "Oh! if I don't show this to everybody. Who could have sent it? Let me look at the handwriting. It's the widow Williams's, as I live."

"Hetty! Hetty! You mad young rattle-brain, give me that letter!"

I darted playfully about the room, for a short time, but in the end permitted him to pluck the valentine from my hand, which he did with an exhibition of more agility than I thought in him. In a moment after he had grasped it, the hearts and darts and tender lines were in a "blaze of glory."

"O uncle Basil!" I lifted my finger and looked into his disturbed countenance, with an arch and merry expression upon my own. "The widow Williams!"

Just as I said this, my eyes rested upon the superscription of a letter lying upon the floor—one of two or three just brought in by John—that had fallen as the old gentleman started up when I snatched away from him his valentine. It was directed to me. Stooping quickly, I caught it from the floor, and slipped it into my bosom; not, however, so adroitly as to escape observation.

"Aha! What's the meaning of that?" said uncle Basil, recovering himself in an instant.

It was now my turn to show confusion. To cover it, I beat a hasty retreat, and was soon locked in my own room. How short, quick, and imperative, were the motions of my heart, as it throbbed almost audibly in my bosom. It was some moments before I was calm enough to break the seal of my "valentine."

From whom had it come? How instinctive was this

question. As I held it in my fingers, still looking at the superscription, and trying to make out the hand-writing, I felt something hard within. Instantly the seal was broken and the envelope removed. There was a sheet of note-paper, bearing the words, "A Love Token," and enclosing a crumpled piece of white tissue paper covering the hard substance that proved to be a diamond ring and a diamond breastpin! For some moments I was bewildered. Then all was clear. My uncle did not mean that I should be deceived as to the sender of my valentine, for his well known, strong, mercantile chirography in the words, "A Love Token," left nothing for my vagrant imagination to dream over.

Dear old man! How rebuked I felt. A little while I sat thoughtful, and then went bounding down stairs to the sitting-room.

"A kiss for your Love Token," said I, as I threw my arms around his neck, and laid my warm lips upon his venerable forehead.

I had not the heart to tell him then that I was the widow Williams from whom his valentine came. But we have since had more than one hearty laugh together over the remembrance of his sudden surprise and confusion when I caught him absorbed in the mysteries of a love-letter.



KATE'S VALENTINE.

KATE, my sprightly niece, like most young ladies of her age, has her own opinions on matters and things currently transpiring. She thinks independently, and generally speaks what she thinks. Of course, her knowledge of human nature is not very deep; nor is she as wise in all her conclusions as she is led to imagine. I do not say this disparagingly, for Kate has quite as good

sense as nine in ten who have only numbered her years, which are about twenty-one.

On one subject, Kate had, for a year or two, been particularly decided in her expressions. The Valentine epidemic, which has raged so violently, she considered a social disease emphatically. It was no healthy manifestation of right feelings, in her estimation.

As last St. Valentine's day approached, and as the store windows and counters began to be filled with emblematic love missives of all kinds, from the most costly, delicate, and refined, down to the cheapest, coarsest, and most vulgar, Kate exhibited more and more strongly her antipathy to the custom about to be honoured.

"If any one were to send me a valentine," said she, "I would take it as a direct insult to my common sense."

"Oh, as for that," I replied, sportively, "lovers are not so silly as to address the common sense of those whose favour they desire to win."

"Whoever wins me," was her prompt answer, "must appeal to that. At no other point will I be accessible."

"We shall see."

"And we will see."

"I'll wager a new hat against a spring bonnet," said I, "that you receive a valentine this year from a certain young man named — Never mind; don't blush so; I won't name him."

"I would discard any one who insulted me with a valentine," replied Kate, indignantly.

"Don't say that, for fear you will have cause to repent the indiscretion."

"Yes, I do say it. No man of good sense would stoop to such trifling."

"I don't know, Kate. A little trifling, now and then, is relished by the best of men."

"That's rhyme, which does not always go hand in hand with reason."

"You'll grow wiser, Kate, as you grow older."

"If that is the kind of wisdom age brings, I'm sure I don't want it."

I answered with a laugh, for to be grave on such a theme was not in me. As the fourteenth approached,

Kate frequently repeated her expressions of disgust at the silly custom of sending valentines that had become so popular, and declared, over and over again, that such a liberty with her, would be taken as a direct insult, and resented accordingly.

Among the visiting acquaintances of Kate, was a young man named Loring, for whom, I could see, she had kinder feelings than for any other male friend; but, either in consequence of a natural reserve of character, or because he was in doubt as to Kate's sentiments regarding himself, he never seemed perfectly at ease in her company, though he sought it on every proper occasion. I had him in my mind when I suggested the reception of a valentine from a certain young man, and Kate understood me perfectly.

Well, Valentine's day came round. At dinner-time, I came home as usual, and almost the first word my wife said to me was—

"What do you think? Kate's received a valentine."

"Indeed!"

"It's true. It came by the Despatch Post. I received it at the door, and sent it up to her room."

"Have you seen her since?"

"No."

"Of course, she's particularly indignant."

"I don't know any thing about that. It was a handsome one I infer, from the size and envelop; and had in it something hard, which I took for jewelry—a breastpin or a bracelet."

"Where do you think it came from?" said I.

"I've guessed young Loring," answered my wife.

"If he has sent it, he has committed a great mistake," I replied.

"How so?"

"You know Kate's antipathy to valentines."

"Young ladies often talk a great deal without really knowing what they say; and Kate is not altogether free from the fault," said my wife.

I readily enough assented to this. When the bell rung for dinner, Kate came down from her room. Her face was rather more sober than usual, and she did not

join in the conversation with her accustomed animation. She was first to retire from the table.

"I don't think she is mortally offended," said I to my wife.

"No, not if I am skilled in mental indications," was replied.

During the afternoon, two or three more love missives came; but not a word touching their reception, or the feelings produced thereby, was breathed by Kate. It was plain, however, to one with even half an eye, that she was pleased at the mark of attention, or, it might be, token of love. Evening, instead of being passed as usual with the family, was spent by Kate in her room.

On the next morning, at the breakfast table, I mentioned the fact that a certain number of valentines had passed through the post-office on the day before. This was in order to introduce the subject, and call out some remark from Kate; but she remained silent on the subject, though not without indicating, by her heightened colour and restless eye, that her thoughts were busy enough.

"I rather think our young lady has changed her opinions," said I, smiling, after Kate had left the table.

"Circumstances alter cases, you know," replied my wife, smiling in turn.

On the next evening, young Loring called in. Kate was longer than usual in making her appearance, and when she came into the parlour, was dressed with more than ordinary care. For the first time, I noticed on her wrist a new and beautiful bracelet. She blushed, slightly, as she met Loring; seemed a little embarrassed, but was soon conversing with him in an animated style.

"Did you see that new bracelet?" asked my wife, when we were next alone.

"I did."

"Where did it come from?"

"Didn't you say that in one of the valentines she received there was something hard, like a piece of jewelry?"

"Yes."

"That bracelet, probably."

"No doubt of it."

"And, moreover," said I, "it is plain that she believes the valentine came from Loring; for, at her first meeting with him, she wears it for the first time."

"Thus," remarked my wife, "notifying him that she receives the token kindly."

I laughed aloud, for I could not help it.

"Why do you laugh?" asked my wife.

"She was going to discard any one who insulted her with a valentine!"

"That was idle talk. I've heard such things said before."

Two or three evenings went by, and Loring came again. Since his former visit, the new bracelet had not been seen. Now it was worn again. As we knew the young man well, and liked him the better the more intimately we knew him, we saw no impropriety in leaving the young couple alone in the parlour.

From that time, there was a marked change in my niece. She was less sprightly and more absent-minded than usual. Next, her appetite failed her, and she began to grow thin and lose her colour—sure signs of a heart disease. Meanwhile, Loring was a constant visitor; and whenever he came, the bracelet was displayed, evidently in token that she knew from whence it came, and wished its full acceptance to be understood. At last, I received a formal visit from the young man, and a formal offer for the hand of Kate. Of course, I had no objections to urge. The matter was, in my mind, already fully settled.

After that, the bracelet aforementioned was always to be seen on the arm of Kate. One evening, it was about a month before her wedding-day, as I sat talking with Kate, for whom my affection had always been as tender as that of a father for his child, I took her hand, and said, as I examined the bracelet—

"That is very beautiful."

"Yes, I have always admired it very much," she replied, the colour growing warmer in her cheeks.

"A love-token, I presume?"

And as I said this, I looked at her archly. The hue of her cheeks became still deeper.

"A valentine?" I added.

The blood mounted to her temples.

"But it was not an ordinary valentine. It did not come from a trifle, and was not received as an insult. I thought you were not the girl, Kate, to reject a sincere offer."

Kate blushed still more deeply.

"This little love-token, dear Kate, is for thee:
Accept it, and keep it, and wear it for me."

As I repeated this couplet, the young girl started with surprise, and looked with inquiring earnestness in my face.

"But I'm afraid, Kate," said I, with a meaning smile, and a voice half-regretful in its tone, "that you wore it less for the real than for an imaginary giver."

She did not reply, but looked at me more earnestly, while a sudden light appeared to break upon her mind.

"Dear uncle," said she, at length, bending toward me, "had you seen this bracelet before you saw it on my arm?"

"Yes, love," was my tenderly spoken reply; and I pressed her pure forehead with my lips as I spoke.

"And you sent it?"

She seemed half breathless as she awaited my reply.

"Yes, dear."

She covered her face suddenly with her hands and sat motionless for some moments. In a little while, I saw a tear come stealing through her fingers. My feelings were touched, for I feared lest I had done violence to hers by this little confession of the truth. But, ere I had looked for composure of mind, she withdrew her hands from her face, on which an affectionate smile shone like a rainbow amid the parting drops of a summer shower, and said, as she arose—

"Henceforth, I will wear it for the real giver."

Bending to kiss me, she left a tear on my cheek, and then glided from the room.

On her wedding night, Kate wore her valentine bracelet; and I am weak enough to believe—if the sentiment may be called a weakness—that she prized it even more highly than if Loring himself had been the giver.

THE RED EAR; OR, THE HUSKING FROLIC.

IN rural districts, the merrymakings have a natural heartiness about them never seen in cities, towns, nor villages. Overweening self-respect has not come in to fetter the motions of the body, nor to smother the laugh in its free utterance. Feeling and action are in close relationship. You come nearer to nature, untrammelled by custom and unaffected by art.

A merrymaking *par excellence*, is, (or was,) a New England husking frolic. The husking frolic at the South is a different affair altogether. There, it is a congregation of negroes from the various plantations near at hand, who, while they work, make the air vocal almost for miles around with their rude melodies, a few of which have been rendered familiar to ears polite by the "Serenaders" who have so highly amused the public during the past two or three years. But at the North, the "husking," like the "quilting," draws together the gentle maidens and loving swains of a neighbourhood, who meet to enjoy themselves in their own way. And such enjoyment as they have, in kind and degree, is not to be met with every day. In former times, the "husking" was a wilder affair than at present. Straight-laced conventionality is gradually finding its way beyond the city limits, and binding the free spirits of our country maidens. They meet oftener with the "city folks," gradually falling more and more into their habits as they partake more and more of their spirit; and, when they assemble for enjoyment, they check their

impulses, restrain their movements, and hush almost into silence the merry laughter that seeks to leap forth like the singing waters of the fountain. No; "huskings" are not what they were. Instead of seeing on the threshing-floor a troop of young men and maidens, stripping from the bright ears of grain their leafy coverings, amid laughter, music, and the mingling of sweet voices, as of old, mere "labour" comes in too often to perform the service, and silently and coldly does its work. Yet, here and there, a farmer, who cannot forget the pleasant times when he was young, sends forth his annual summons after the maize harvest is gathered, and then comes a merrymaking for old and young that is enjoyed in a way never to be forgotten.

Old Ephraim Bradley was a man of this school. If his head grew white under the falling snows of many winters, the grass was fresh and green, and the flowers ever blooming on his heart. With him, the annual "husking" was never omitted. It was, like Christmas and Thanksgiving, almost a sacred thing, half involving sin in the omission.

Kate Mayflower, a wild romp of a girl from Boston—at least some in the city regarded her as such—was spending a few weeks in D——, when invitations came to attend a husking party at Ephraim Bradley's. The old man lived some three miles from the village. Kate had heard about husking parties, and her young spirits leaped up when the announcement was made that one was to be held in the neighbourhood, and that she was invited to be present. It was a frolic that, from all she had heard, would just suit her temperament, and she set off, when the time came, to make one of the party, in the merriest possible mood.

Evening had closed in on the arrival of the party from D——, who quickly joined some score or two of young people in the large kitchen, where lay heaped up in the centre a huge pile of Indian corn.

"All that to be husked?" whispered Kate, as she entered the room.

"Oh yes! all that and more, perhaps," was the smiling reply. "We have come to work, you know."

"Now, gals," said old Mr. Bradley, who stood looking on as the young folks gathered, with bright faces, around the golden grain, "now for a good old-fashioned time. If there are not half a dozen weddings between this and Christmas, I shall say there is no virtue in red ears."

As he ceased, down dropped, amid gay voices and laughter, the whole company upon the floor, in all graceful and ungraceful positions, in a circle around the pile of corn. Kate alone remained standing, for the movement was so sudden that she could not act with it.

"Here's room for you, Kate," cried one of the girls who had come with her, making a place by her side; and down sank Kate, feeling, for the first time, a little awkward and confused. Beside her was a stout rough country youth, whose face was all merriment, and whose eyes were dancing with anticipated pleasure. The city girl eyed his rough, brown hands, coarse garments, and unpolished face, with a slight feeling of repulsion, and drew a little from him toward her friend.

"Oh, plenty of room, miss! Plenty of room," said he, turning broadly around, and addressing her with a familiar leer. "The tighter we fit in, the better. Lay the brands close, if you want a good fire."

Kate could not help laughing at this. As she laughed, he added—

"All free and easy here." He had grasped an ear of corn, and was already stripping down the husk. "A red ear!" suddenly burst from his lips, in a tone of triumph; and, as he spoke, he sprang toward, or rather upon Kate, with the grace of a young bear, and kissed her with a "smack" that might have been heard a dozen rooms off. Ere she had time to recover from the surprise, and, it must be admitted, indignation, occasioned by this unexpected assault upon her lips, the hero of the first "red ear" was half around the circle of struggling girls, kissing both right and left with a skill and heartiness that awoke shouts of applause from the young "fellers," who envied his good fortune.

That was a new phase of life to Kate. She had heard of kissing as an amusement among young folks, and had often thought that the custom was too good to have be-

come obsolete; but a practical view, and a personal participation like this, was a thing that her imagination had, in none of its vagaries, conceived. An old-fashioned, straight-backed, flag-bottomed chair stood near, and, unwilling to trust herself again upon the floor, Kate drew that into the circle, and seated herself close to the pile of corn just as the young man had completed his task of kissing every girl in the room.

"First rate that!" said he, smacking his lips, as he threw himself at her feet. "Wasn't I lucky?"

Kate's indignation had, by this time, all melted away under a lively sense of the ludicrous, and she could not help laughing with the merriest. Soon another red ear was announced, and then the kissing commenced again. Such struggling, wrestling, screaming, and laughing, Kate had never heard nor seen. The young man who held the prize had all the nerve required to go through with his part, as Kate clearly proved when it came to her turn to receive a salute. Springing from her chair, she fled into the next room; but this only increased his eagerness to touch the lips of "the beautiful girl from Boston," and he soon had his arms around her and his hands upon her cheeks. The struggle was long and well sustained on the part of the maiden; but her fate was to be kissed, and kissed by a rough young countryman whom she had never met before. The deed was done, and then the blushing, panting girl was led back in triumph to the room from which she had escaped.

Red ears were in plenty that evening. It was shrewdly guessed that every young man had come with at least two in his pockets, for all the girls avowed that never before had Farmer Bradley's field of corn produced so many. As for Kate, she was kissed and kissed, until making, as she alleged to her friend, a virtue of necessity, she submitted with the kindest grace imaginable; and, if the truth must be told, enjoyed the frolic with as lively a zest as any one present.

At length the great pile of corn disappeared, and the company arranged themselves for dancing; but they had hardly been on the floor half an hour, when supper was

announced—and such a supper as that was! No pyramids of ice-cream or candied oranges. No mock nor real turtle; nor oysters in a dozen styles. Turkeys there were, but not scientifically “boned.” No; there were none of the fashionable city delicacies; but instead, “a gigantic round of beef in the centre of the table was flanked on either side with vegetables. A bouncing junk of corned-beef was at one end, and a big chicken-pie at the other. An Indian pudding, of ample dimensions, stood forth between the middle and end of the end dishes, and a giant pot of beans loomed up on the other side; while pumpkin-pies, apple-sauce, and a host of other ‘fixings’ filled up the spaces.”

This was the bill of fare for the evening, and our city belle looked on with a new surprise, as she saw the articles disappearing one after another like frost work on window-panes at sunrise. If the good wife did not say on this, as was said on a similar occasion, “Lay hold, and help yourselves, gals—make a long arm; and let the men folks take keer of themselves. If any on you likes turnips *squat* and buttered, *squat* and butter ’em to suit yourselves”—at least as hearty and primitive an invitation to go to work on the good things was extended, and no one could complain that it was not acted upon. What followed is best given in the language of one who has already described a similar scene:—

“The guests seemed to do ample justice to the viands; mirth and festivity reigned around the board. Jokes, witticisms, and flashes of fun would occasionally ‘set the table in a roar.’ All appeared determined to enjoy themselves at the ‘top of their bent.’

“Soon as supper was over, all the girls lent a hand and the table was cleared away in a jiffy. Blindman’s buff was then introduced; the company now was uproarious! Dancing was the next consideration. Amos Bunker screwed up his viol, resined the bow, and ‘did up’ the toe-and-heel inspiring notes of Fisher’s hornpipe; while a number of the party, who were somewhat skilled in the terpsichorean art, put in the ‘double shuffle rigadon.’ Presently the lookers-on caught the enthusiasm, and the

whole company, old and young, adepts and novices, took the floor and did their utmost :

‘Twas right and left, and down outside, six round and back to back :
Harum-scarum, helter skelter, bump together, whack.’

“And thus was the husking kept up til the old clock, which stood in one corner of the kitchen, beat out twelve ; then broke up this jolly gathering.”

So it was at old Farmer Bradley’s. When Kate went back to Boston, she was free to own that she had enjoyed a new kind of merrymaking, and avowed her purpose to be at old Ephraim Bradley’s when the next husking came off.



COOKS.

MR. JOHN BROWN was a man of orderly mind and systematic habits. His business went on like clock work; and he would have it so. If the least irregularity appeared, you may be sure he would see it and know the reason.

"All you have to do," he would sometimes say, "is to will to have things right. A resolute purpose is every thing."

This doctrine he uniformly preached to Mrs. Brown on the occasion of every domestic irregularity; especially when she complained that she could not make cook, nurse, or chambermaid do as she wished.

"Establish a certain rule, and see that it is obeyed," he would say to her. "That's my plan, and I have no trouble. An *employée* of mine knows that it is as much as his place is worth to go contrary to rule; and, if you made the keeping of a place in your household dependent on strict obedience to your orders, you would have far less trouble."

"It is very easy to talk," Mrs. Brown would generally reply to these suggestions.

"And just as easy to act," would respond Mr. Brown. "I know. I've tried it. You have only to resolve to have a thing done right, and it is done. Nothing more easy in the world. There is Judson, my neighbour, an easy sort of a man, with no order in his mind. Well, of course, every thing around him is at sixes and sevens; and he's always complaining that he can never get anybody to do as he wishes. Give him the best clerk in the city, and he'll spoil him in three months. And why? There is no order in the man's business. He has no sys-

tem. I have two young men in my store who were so worthless with Judson, according to his own account, that he had to send them off. I wouldn't ask for better clerks. In the beginning, I let them understand I was a man who would have things my own way, and they soon understood that this was not a mere matter of words. It's the order, Jane—the order. Fix an order in your household, and all this trouble will cease."

"Order among intelligent clerks may be easily enough attained," said Mrs. Brown to her husband, one morning, after some remarks of this kind, which had arisen from the fact of company being expected to dinner; "but I'd like to see the order you would maintain with a parcel of subordinates like our Biddy to deal with. I imagine you'd find your hands full. Ignorant Irish girls are not so easy to bring into order."

"A good system and a good resolution are all that is wanted."

"You think so?"

"I know so."

"I wish you had the trial for a week."

"You'd see a different state of things," confidently replied the husband.

"No doubt of it," returned Mrs. Brown; who was hurt by her husband's rebuking manner, and showed it in her tone of voice.

Mr. Brown was a kind-hearted man—what cannot always be said of *very* orderly people—and was pained to see the effect of his words.

"Oh, well, never mind, Jane," said he soothingly. "We can't all do alike. I know you manage excellently on the whole. But won't you, to-day, watch Biddy a little closer, and see that she has dinner at the hour? She is so apt to be late. I wouldn't like Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Agnew to notice any thing irregular in our household economy."

"I presume our household arrangements are fully as good as theirs," said Mrs. Brown a little sharply, for she was more fretted in mind than her husband supposed.

"That may all be; but won't you see that Biddy has dinner precisely at three?"

"I'll do the best I can, but can't promise any thing," said Mrs. Brown, whose mind her husband had chafed so much that she did not attempt to conceal her annoyance.

Mr. Brown went away grumbling to himself, and Mrs. Brown went into the kitchen, and, in no very amiable tone of voice, said to Biddy—

"We're to have company to dine with us to-day, and Mr. Brown expects dinner on the table precisely at three. Now, pray, don't let it be a minute later."

Biddy always made it a point to be cross whenever there was company. This announcement alone, no matter in how amiable a tone it had been made, would have sufficed to arouse her ill-nature; but coming as it did, in a fretful voice, she was filled instantly with a spirit of opposition. Not the slightest reply did she make—not the smallest sign that she heard escaped her.

Mrs. Brown stood a few minutes and then said, angrily—

"Did you hear what I said?"

"I'm not deaf, marm," pertly returned Biddy.

"Then why didn't you answer me?"

Biddy turned away with a contemptuous toss of the head, and resumed her work.

"See here, my lady!"—But Mrs. Brown checked herself, for she knew Biddy's temper, and understood that, in entering into a regular contest with her, the question of victory would be doubtful. In all probability, it would end in her being compelled to order the insolent creature out of the house; and then who was to cook the dinner? This thought caused Mrs. Brown to curb her feelings, and to put a bridle upon her tongue.

"Biddy," said Mrs. Brown, after pausing a few moments to compose herself—she spoke calmly—"we are to have company to-day, and I wish dinner on the table precisely at three o'clock."

Then Mrs. Brown left the kitchen, and went up to her sitting-room, feeling, as may well be supposed, no little "out of sorts." As to dinner being ready at three precisely, she had no expectation of the thing whatever. Mr. Brown would be seriously annoyed, and all her pleasures would, of course, be destroyed. No very agreeable anticipation this, in view of having company.

An hour after Mr. Brown went away, one of his men brought home a basket of marketing. On its arrival, Mrs. Brown descended once more to the lower regions of her house, in order to ascertain the nature of the provision that had been made, and to give some directions to her cook. Biddy received her mistress in no very amiable mood. In fact, she cast upon her a glance of defiance as she entered. The basket looked over, and a few brief directions given, Mrs. Brown retired. There was to be trouble that day with Biddy—nothing was more apparent.

About twelve o'clock, the ladies who were engaged to dine, arrived. Their husbands would come at three, with Mr. Brown. Mrs. Brown's heart was full; and, as from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, she entertained her visitors during the first hour with her troubles with servants. The subject was an interesting one to them, for they were housekeepers, and prepared to sympathize. They had also their own trials to relate, and were eloquent upon their sufferings. As for cooks, they were all voted to be a most horrible set of creatures, and the authors of more domestic misery than was to be charged to any other account. In the midst of an interesting discussion of this kind, Mrs. Brown excused herself, and went to pay a visit of exploration into Biddy's department. Things didn't look very encouraging. She had been entrusted with the work of preparing certain articles of desert; but Mrs. Brown saw at a glance they were destined to be spoiled unless she took charge of them herself. So, without remarking on the subject, she told Biddy to go up to her room and get her an apron.

This was done with a certain air, the meaning of which was not mistaken. But Mrs. Brown didn't choose to be drawn into a regular quarrel. She took the apron, and, tying it on, went to work at the puddings, and soon had them just to her liking. After giving careful directions to have the ovens in good order, before they were put in, she went up stairs and rejoined her company. At two o'clock, Mrs. Brown visited the kitchen again. Nothing was as forward as it should have been, and cook was in as bad humour as ever.

"You'll be late, Biddy, after all," said Mrs. Brown.
"This is no kind of a fire."

"The coal won't burn," replied Biddy.

"It always has burned. Strange that it doesn't burn now!"

And Mrs. Brown began to examine the range.

"No wonder," said she, "with this damper half closed, How could you expect coal to burn without a free draft? There, you can see the fire increasing already. Now do, Biddy, stir yourself; it's after two o'clock."

Biddy didn't deign an answer to this appeal; and Mrs. Brown, after standing as an observer of her movements for a little while, went up stairs, satisfied that no dinner would be ready at three o'clock.

Just at a quarter before three, Mr. Brown arrived, with Mr. Clark and Mr. Agnew, whose wives had already made their appearance.

"Dinner most ready?" said he to Mrs. Brown, whom he found in the dining-room, soon after his entrance.

"I believe so," replied Mrs. Brown.

"It's ten minutes of three."

"I can't help it," said Mrs. Brown.

"But I hope, Jane, that dinner isn't going to be late" Mr. Brown spoke in a nervous manner.

"It won't be ready at three, that's certain. Biddy's been in a dreadful humour all the morning, and has done nothing right."

"Oh, dear. This want of punctuality does distress me! Why do you keep such a creature about you?"

"Do, Mr. Brown," said his wife, in an appealing voice, "go into the parlour and wait as patiently as you can until dinner is ready! I'm so nervous now that I can hardly hold a thing in my hands."

Mr. Brown did as he was desired to do; but his organ of punctuality was in a state of active excitement. Ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, even forty minutes passed, and there came no welcome sound of the dinner-bell. Unable to curb his impatience any longer, Mr. Brown left the parlour, and once more sought his wife. She was still in the dining-room, where the table was set, but where no sign of the hunger-quelling banquet was discernible.

"In Heaven's name, my dear!" said Mr. Brown, "what has made all this delay?"

"Go and ask Biddy," replied the over-tired lady; "and, if you get any satisfaction from her on the subject, you will be more fortunate than I am."

Upon this hint, and acting on the spur of the moment, Mr. Brown hurried off toward the kitchen. He would regulate the matter in quick order. He would have dinner on the table in a twinkling, or know the reason! Such were his thoughts and purposes. Mrs. Brown, anticipating trouble, followed close after her husband.

"See here, my lady!" was the salutation with which Mr. Brown met Biddy, as he entered the kitchen. "What's the meaning of all this work to-day? Why isn't dinner ready? Are you to be the arbiter of affairs in my house?"

Now Biddy, as the reader understands by this time, was in a defiant humour. The kitchen she felt to be her castle, and was ever inclined to dispute with any and every one the right of entrance. Had Mrs. Brown kept away during the morning, dinner would have been ready at the hour. But every time the mistress appeared, the cook's temper was more and more ruffled, and her spirit of opposition more and more aroused. Since her husband's arrival, Mrs. Brown had manifested herself to Biddy not less than half a dozen times, and, at each appearance, made some fretful and irritating remarks touching the lateness of dinner. The climax to all this was the sudden entrance of the incensed Mr. Brown. As he came in, Biddy was in the act of turning from the range with a dish in her hands, on which was a large sirloin of beef. The words of Mr. Brown did not have the effect of subduing the spirit of Biddy, as he had anticipated. For a moment, she glared at him with a look of defiance, while her face grew scarlet with anger; then tossing the dish and its contents with a crash at his feet, and plentifully scattering the gravy over his pantaloons and the silk dress of his wife, who came to his side at the moment, she exclaimed, fiercely—

"There's your dinner! And I hope you're satisfied!"

There was a long pause of consternation on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Brown, during which Biddy retired from the

kitchen with a dignity that may be imagined, but not described. Mr. and Mrs. Brown also retired, and in a manner quite as indescribable; and, seating themselves in the dining-room, collected their scattered wits for a council of war. The lady's silk dress was a sight to be seen. It was perfectly ruined, large patches of grease being freely distributed over the front breadth for a distance of more than half a yard from the bottom. The gentleman's pantaloons were in no better condition.

"Oh, dear! what is to be done?" said Mrs. Brown, with pale face and panting bosom. "I declare, I'm right sick!"

"Well, if that doesn't get ahead of me!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, who, struck with the ludicrousness of the scene, hardly knew whether to laugh or to give an angry vent to his feelings.

"But what are we to do? It's nearly four o'clock now, and the beef is lying upon the kitchen floor!" said Mrs. Brown, in great distress.

Mr. Brown was a man for an emergency. He was not to be put down teetotally under any circumstances. He had met and conquered many difficulties in his time, and he was not to be overcome by this one.

"Do the best we can, Jane," said he, speaking with a sudden cheerfulness of manner. "Go and tell Nancy to come down and serve up the dinner, while you change your dress as quickly as possible. I will see our friends in the parlour, and make an apology for the delay. Put a good face on it. Laugh at the joke, and all will be well."

Mrs. Brown, after demurring a little, went up and did as her husband suggested, while he, becoming more and more alive every moment to the ludicrousness of the scene he had just witnessed, entered the parlour laughing. Here, to the amusement of all parties, he related, in his own way, what had just occurred, exhibiting, at the same time, some evidences of the recent scene in his soiled garments.

"And now, ladies," said he, smiling, "if you'll take pity on my poor wife, who is changing her dress, and go down and see that Nancy, our good-humoured chambermaid, serves up the dinner in some kind of order, you will

help to turn a serious matter into a source of merriment."

Up sprang the two ladies at this hint, and were off to the kitchen in a jiffy, and, with such right good-will did they go to work, that the dinner-bell rang ere Mrs. Brown had finished her toilet.

A pleasanter dinner-party never assembled at the table of Mr. and Mrs. Brown before nor since. There was good humour, and free and easy conversation in plenty. The cooking stories that were told, if written out, would fill a volume. Cooks were voted to be the veriest torments on the face of the earth. Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Agnew, in relating some of their experiences, frequently set the whole party in a roar.



COUNTRY BOARDING.

PART I.

Looking for a Nice Farm-house.

SUMMER after summer had Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins spent amid the heat and dust and noise of the city, while many of their friends and neighbours sped away to the country, and passed the sultry months where the pure airs played among the cooling shadows, and the bright streams danced along refreshingly through green meadows, or gave a new charm to wood and valley. Often and often had they sighed for a rural season; but, somehow or other, they could never just make it convenient to follow their inclinations in this particular.

One day last summer—it was in July, and the thermometer had been ranging from ninety-six to a hundred for nearly a fortnight—on the return home of Mr. Jenkins, at the approach of evening, his good lady said to him, in a fretful tone of voice—

“What am I to do with these boys, Mr. Jenkins? The holidays have begun, and they are to be home for two months.”

“Oh dear!” returned Mr. Jenkins, evincing considerable perplexity of mind at this intelligence. “Two months’ holiday! It will be their ruination.”

“And the death of me,” said Mrs. Jenkins. “I can never stand it in the world. I’m almost worried out of my life with them on Saturdays; and what will it be when there are two months of Saturdays? I can’t turn

Tom and Dick into the street, and let them go into all sorts of company."

"No, indeed; that will not do," replied the father.

"And they'll never content themselves in the house. That's impossible," said Mrs. Jenkins. "Moreover, it would be cruel to shut them up like prisoners in their own house. I declare, I feel utterly at a loss."

"Hadn't we better try to get into the country for a couple of months?" suggested Mr. Jenkins.

"I've been thinking of that," replied the wife. "I don't see what better we can do. It would be very pleasant for all of us. We might get boarding in some nice farm house, where there was plenty of good milk, fruit and vegetables. Oh! it would be delightful for the children; and I would enjoy it almost as much as any of them."

Mrs. Jenkins's imagination warmed at the very thought.

"It's the best thing we can do," said Mr. Jenkins. "The only drawback, is the necessity for my being in the city every day."

"Oh, as for that, you know," returned Mrs. Jenkins, confidently, "it will be easy to get a place so near to the city that you can come in early in the morning, and go out before dark in the evening. Cars, steamboats, and stages, afford every facility of this kind."

"I'm not so sure of that," said the husband. "Still, there is nothing like trying. How would you like a place in Germantown? The cars run frequently, and pass over the distance in some twenty minutes."

"I wouldn't like that at all," was promptly answered. "Germantown isn't the country. I want to go right into the country."

"That would be better, certainly."

"A plain country farm-house, well shaded, with good, substantial country fare, will be cheapest and best. If we go to the country, let us go to the country."

"Perhaps you are right. Well, if we go, we must not hesitate nor delay about the matter. Here it is mid-summer, and the season rapidly passing away."

"I'm really in earnest," said Mrs. Jenkins.

"I like the idea very much," returned Mr. Jenkins.

And they continued to talk and think about the matter during the evening, and lay awake canvassing it for an hour or two after retiring to bed. The result was, a unanimous decision to go into the country as soon as a suitable place could be found.

On the next morning, Mr. Jenkins referred to the "Boarding and To Let" column of the Ledger, with an interest never before felt in that department of the paper. To his great satisfaction, he found several advertisements headed "Country Boarding," two of which appeared to suit his case exactly. One of these read thus:—"A respectable family can obtain country boarding, at a farm-house delightfully situated a few miles from the city, in one of the healthiest and most romantic districts of country in the vicinity of Philadelphia. Terms moderate. Inquire at No. —, Market street." The other was in these words:—"A small family, desiring genteel country boarding in a farm-house, with all the comforts of a home, will hear of such a place by inquiring at No. —, Second street."

With these two advertisements in his pocket-book, Mr. Jenkins started forth after breakfast, eager to secure one of the places in advance of any other application. His first call was in Market street, at a store where some kind of botanic medicines were sold. A man was behind the counter putting up a package for a customer.

"You advertised something about country boarding," said Mr. Jenkins, confidently.

"Country boarding?" returned the man, as if he was not certain that he heard aright.

"Yes; at a farm-house near the city."

"I don't know any thing about it," said the man, indifferently, looking down at the package he was tying up.

"Is this No. —?" inquired Mr. Jenkins, as he took the advertisement from his pocket-book, and examined it carefully.

"Yes, sir; that is my number," was replied.

"Did you put in this advertisement?" and Mr. Jenkins handed him the bit of paper he had cut from the Ledger.

The man looked at it for some time before light broke in upon his mind.

"Oh!" he at length said. "Now I remember. Yes, yes. It's up the Schuylkill, about a mile from Spring Mill."

"Is it a pleasant place?" inquired Mr. Jenkins.

"Well, I guess so. But I don't know much about it. Never was there."

"Who put in this advertisement?" asked Jenkins.

"The man who lives there."

"At the farm-house?"

"Yes."

"What's his name?"

"Hodge."

"Where can I see him?"

"He's in town twice a week, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Or you can go out to his place."

"How can I get there?" asked Jenkins.

"You go out to Spring Mill on the Norristown railroad; but I don't know how you get over to Hodge's place."

"It's a mile from the river, you say?"

"Yes."

"Do you know his terms?"

The man shook his head, and answered—

"The fact is, I don't know any thing about it. Mr. Hodge said he would refer to me, and he has done so; but I have no particular information to give applicants."

"He'll be in town on Wednesday, you say?"

"Yes," replied the man; and Jenkins departed.

Next he applied in Second street, and learned that the "farm-house," which promised all the comforts of a home, was situated in Bucks county, about nine miles from Bristol. This wouldn't do. It would take up too much of his time to travel some sixty miles daily, and he couldn't think of being separated from his family.

Twenty acquaintances were asked that day if they knew where country boarding was to be had. From some who had tried the experiment he did not get very flattering accounts; others said they had been endeavouring for weeks to find a place that suited them, but without success. Then one spoke discouragingly of a farm-house or

private family, and advised a country tavern, where formal preparations for boarders were made; another said, "Go over into New Jersey, by all means;" while another said, "Go anywhere but in New Jersey." By the close of the day, Jenkins was quite bewildered on the subject of country boarding. A little conversation with his wife, however, brought his mind clear again. The location was to be a farm-house in Pennsylvania, a few miles from the city, easy of access, and plentifully surrounded with shade-trees.

On the next morning, two or three new advertisements appeared in the Ledger. One of these seemed the very thing. It described a farm-house, pleasantly situated amid romantic scenery, and easy of access by stages several times a day. As inquiry was to be made on the premises, Mr. Jenkins concluded to go out in the afternoon; and, for this purpose, hired a wagon. The distance was between four and six miles on the West Chester road; and he was not long in reaching the neighbourhood he sought. On inquiring, he learned that the farm-house he wished to visit was half a mile from the turnpike, on a cross road, which he took and kept on his way. In due time, he arrived at the place to which he had been referred; but looked around, in vain, for the elegant situation his mind had pictured.

"Can you tell me where Mr. Crabtree lives?" inquired Jenkins, of a man whom he met.

"There," said the man, pointing to a small, dingy-looking house a short distance from the road, near which shot up three or four unsightly and decaying Lombardy poplars, and around which clustered a few bits of shrubbery, and one or two old pear-trees, that, if good for fruit, were nearly guiltless of any effort at shade.

"That can't be the place of which I am in search." And Jenkins shook his head positively. "I'm looking for a Mr. Crabtree, who takes summer boarders."

"There's no other Mr. Crabtree in the neighbourhood," replied the man.

"Are you certain?"

"I ought to be; for I've lived hereabout all my life."

"Does this person take summer boarders?"

"He's going to this summer. I heard him say so."

"What kind of a man is he?" now inquired Jenkins.

"A very nice man," was the unqualified answer.

"He seems to have a poor kind of a house."

"I wish I had as good a one," was replied to this.

"And you're sure that is the place?" said Jenkins.

"I'm sure Mr. Crabtree lives there," answered the man.

"How will I get to the house?"

"Keep along until you come to the old cherry-tree yonder, and turn off into the lane."

Jenkins thanked the man for his information and rode on, the ardour of his anticipations sensibly cooled. At the old cherry-tree he turned off, and approached the house, which did not greatly improve in his eyes as he came nearer and nearer. It was built of stone, and was two stories high; but all its dimensions were contracted. Over the door was a narrow portico, supported by wooden posts that had once been white. Upon this clambered a neglected honeysuckle. No walk led to the door, and the grass grew rankly, interspersed with weeds, in front. The ordinary entrance to the house was, evidently, on the other side.

The lane terminated at a barn, where Jenkins dismounted and fastened his horse. Then he entered a small gate, and, by a pathway, advanced to the house. He had moved along the path a few rods, and was near the dwelling, when, suddenly, with a deep-mouthed yell, out sprang a savage-looking dog, and made toward him with the evident purpose of trying the quality of his flesh.

"Get out!" roared Jenkins, in sudden terror—for the animal was as large and fierce-looking as a wolf—and he stooped to pick up a stone.

"Get out!" responded a louder and hoarser voice than his. "Get out, Nero!"

And Farmer Crabtree ran from the house, and called off the savage beast just as he was about springing, with mouth extended, upon Jenkins. The dog retired, suspicious and growling at the strange intruder; and the farmer said—

"Don't be alarmed, sir. He won't bite you."

"Oh no! I'm not alarmed," returned Jenkins, in a

voice that trembled so much that he could scarcely articulate.

"Come in," said Farmer Crabtree; and Jenkins followed him into the house.

"You advertised to take summer boarders," remarked Jenkins as they entered.

"Yes, sir," replied the farmer. "We think of taking a family or two. We have a snug place here, and some room to spare. Do you wish to get boarding?"

"I do."

"For yourself alone?"

"For my family. But I hardly think you have room here for so large a family as mine." And Jenkins glanced around the apartment.

"How many have you?" asked Crabtree.

"Nine. Myself and wife, six children and a nurse."

"How old are the children?"

"My oldest boy is fourteen, and my youngest three."

"Plenty of room for even more. Will you walk upstairs and look at the chambers?"

Jenkins expressed a willingness to do so, when the farmer called his wife, and they ascended to the next floor.

"This is our spare room," said the farmer's wife, "and a snug room it is. If a body couldn't be comfortable here, they couldn't be comfortable anywhere."

The room was about ten feet by twelve, and had windows on two sides. A four-post bedstead, that looked as if it might have been made prior to the Revolution, stood in one corner, and on this was a plethoric feather bed, covered with a patchwork quilt. The rest of the furniture consisted of four Windsor chairs; a tall, three-legged toilet-table, covered with a white cloth, whereon rested a new toilet-glass, the price of which was somewhere in the neighbourhood of fifty cents; and a small, stained pine-table, or stand for holding a washhand-basin and pitcher. The floor was covered with a rag-carpet.

"This is our best room," said the farmer's wife, with the tone and manner of one who felt some pride in her housekeeping.

After Jenkins had fully surveyed the apartment, he

was shown a small chamber adjoining, that covered the entry. Above were two garret-rooms, each one half the size of the "best room."

"Of course," said Mrs. Crabtree, "your two youngest children sleep in the room with you."

Jenkins assented to this.

"Two could sleep in the little room over the entry, and two in one of the garrets, while your servant could have the other garret all to herself."

This was a very nice arrangement. It seemed as if the house had been built for the especial accommodation of Jenkins's family; though it must be confessed that Mr. Jenkins did not feel very much flattered by the apparent foresight of the builder.

"What are your terms?" next inquired Mr. Jenkins.

"Five dollars for grown persons, and three for children and servants," was the ready answer.

"Rather a high price for such accommodations," said Jenkins.

This remark was not at all relished by the farmer's wife, who was about making a tart reply, but was restrained by a glance from her more prudent husband, who said—

"We might take your family for thirty dollars."

Jenkins was by no means tempted, and hesitated not to say that he did not think their terms would suit him. The Crabtrees then retraced a little, and finally agreed to take the family for twenty-five dollars.

"Your rooms are too small," said Jenkins.

"They're a very fair size, contended the farmer's wife. "And, moreover," she added, "you don't expect to stay in your rooms all the time. People come into the country to get fresh air. Your children will live out of doors."

The house stood on rising ground, and commanded a very fine view. To this the farmer called the attention of Jenkins, who was charmed with the prospect. Then the farmer praised every thing appertaining to the place. The water was the best within five miles, and there wasn't a healthier situation to be found. His wife was one of the best cooks in the world, and kindness itself.

So earnest was the farmer in his laudations, that Jenkins began to doubt the evidence of his own eyes, and at length came to think that he had found a very desirable location. Finally he went away, promising to bring his wife out to look at the place. As he rode homeward, and saw along the way one elegant seat after another, the few attractions he had observed in the farm-house entirely faded from his imagination. Still, he did not make an altogether unfavourable report, though he spoke in rather qualified terms.

Three or four more days were passed in looking after a suitable place for the family to rusticate in for a couple of months; but nothing offered that had not some objection of too serious a nature to be overcome.

"I don't see what we are to do, unless we take that place on the West Chester road," said Jenkins, discouraged at last in his efforts to find country boarding. "There'll be one advantage. We'll have the house all to ourselves. It's a secluded place, and the children will be safe."

"You said the rooms were small," remarked Mrs. Jenkins, glancing around the large, airy, handsomely furnished chamber in which they were seated.

"Yes: they are rather small. But that is the case generally, at least so far as the chambers are concerned, in country houses. Suppose you ride out with me to-morrow and look at the place?"

"Do you think it worth while for me to do so?" asked Mrs. Jenkins. "You have been there, and can judge of it as well as I can."

"It seems to be that or nothing," said Jenkins.

"Then you'd better go out and secure it for the season. We only want boarding for a couple of months, and things will have to be bad indeed, if we can't endure them for that length of time. The main thing is to get our children into the country during the holidays, and give them a breath of pure air and a chance to run."

So it was concluded to engage boarding with Farmer Crabtree, which was immediately done.

PART II.

Trying the Experiment.

It was a happy day in the house when Mr. Jenkins made known the fact that he had secured summer boarding with Farmer Crabtree; for every mind, natural enough to think, was filled with pleasant anticipations. Dick and Tom were almost wild with delight, and Mrs. Jenkins felt so excited about the matter that she hardly knew what to do with herself.

"How much we shall enjoy the summer!" said the latter over and over again. "What a change from hot, sweltering walls to cool and pleasant woods and fields! From the stifling, stagnant air of a crowded city to a pure and breezy atmosphere! And, then, I shall feel so relieved about the children. Tom and Dick will have a free range."

"Above all," would remark the husband, "we shall secure health, that greatest of all blessings."

Here was the broadest resting-place for Mr. Jenkins, as his thoughts went on toward the untried future—the future of country boarding. That somebody would be disappointed, he had serious misgivings; but health would compensate for any drawbacks to personal comfort which might happen to arise; and that such drawbacks would come he felt too well assured, as the image of that little house and its little rooms stood forth distinctly before the eyes of his mind.

Well, in due time the family of Mr. Jenkins was ready for its summer migration. Carpets had been taken up and packed away in tobacco, little valuables distributed, for safe keeping, among friends not so fortunate as them-



Figure 1 consists of nine scatter plots arranged in a 3x3 grid. Each plot shows the relationship between the number of children (x-axis, 0 to 10) and the number of adults (y-axis, 0 to 10). The plots show a positive correlation between the number of children and the number of adults, with the number of adults generally increasing as the number of children increases.

[illegible]

selves in being able to escape from the city, and all the varied necessary arrangements for leaving the town-house completed. The superintendence of all this, with a great part of the actual labour, fell upon Mrs. Jenkins, who was, by the time every thing was ready for the move, so completely worn down with fatigue that she could hardly stand.

It was late in the afternoon of one of the hottest and most oppressive days of the season, that Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, a domestic, and four children (Dick and Tom had gone out in the morning in a furniture wagon, by which had been sent trunks of clothing and a few articles of furniture,) took their seats in a carriage and started for their summer retreat.

"Oh, how my head does ache!" said Mrs. Jenkins, placing her hand upon her forehead. "It has ached all day as if it would burst. I really feel sick."

"You have over-fatigued yourself. The day has been excessively hot, and you have worked too hard. But a season of rest and renovation is before you."

"And thankful I am for it. How glad I shall feel when I can lay my head upon my pillow to-night, far away from the heat and noise and stifling airs of the city!"

The carriage was moving on briskly, and it was not long before they were over the bridge and beyond West Philadelphia, with the country all around them.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins, as they passed one of the neatest and most highly improved places on the road.

"It is indeed very beautiful," returned Mr. Jenkins, half sighing as he spoke; for, in strong contrast came up in his imagination the really unimproved, comfortless, and uninviting domicile of Farmer Crabtree, and he felt that in the mind of Mrs. Jenkins were types and shadows of things in country life not to be realized.

"Beautiful! very beautiful!" came from the lips of Mrs. Jenkins, as one handsomely improved residence after another was passed. "How much I shall enjoy myself!" she would add, every now and then. "I always liked the country."

After turning off from the main road, Mrs. Jenkins ceased her admiring remarks and leaned back in the carriage. They had ridden about half a mile farther, and were near the old cherry-tree pointed out to Mr. Jenkins on his first visit to that neighbourhood, when the lady said, as she glanced from the carriage-window—

“That’s a mean-looking place.”

The eyes of Mr. Jenkins followed the direction taken by those of his wife, and rested on the not very attractive residence of Farmer Crabtree. Even less attractive than before did it now appear in his eyes. He did not reply to his wife’s remark; for he could not find it in his heart to tell her the truth: and yet the truth must come, and that right speedily.

“Turn off here,” said Mr. Jenkins to the driver as they reached the old cherry-tree.

“That isn’t the place!” came, in a quick voice of surprise and disappointment from the lips of Mrs. Jenkins, as she leaned from the carriage-window, and took in, at a glance, all the beauties of the farm-house.

“Yes; this is the place!” returned Mr. Jenkins, with assumed cheerfulness. “You have the worst view from this point,” he added, in a tone of apology.

Mrs. Jenkins made no further remark, but sank back in the carriage, while a shadow came stealing over her face.

“How my head does ache!” she murmured, a few minutes afterward.

Arrived at last, the family descended from the carriage, and were received by Mr. and Mrs. Crabtree with all due formality. Poor Mrs. Jenkins tried to be cheerful and look pleased. But it was a vain effort. She was really sick—sick, as well from disappointment as from exhaustion and fatigue. And this was the nice farm-house where she was to spend the summer so delightfully!

“Will you show me our room?” asked Mrs. Jenkins, soon after their entrance.

Mrs. Crabtree conducted her to the room which had been duly set apart as the one she was to occupy with her husband, and, as she entered it, remarked—

"I think you will find it very comfortable here, ma'am. This is our spare room."

The eyes of Mrs. Jenkins were thrown around the apartment eagerly.

"It's very small," was her only remark.

"We think it quite a sizeable room," returned Mrs. Crabtree, in a voice that showed a slight movement of displeasure.

"Will you ask my husband to come up?" said Mrs. Jenkins.

"Certainly, ma'am." And Mrs. Crabtree left the room.

When Mr. Jenkins entered the chamber, he found his wife sitting near one of the windows with her bonnet still on.

"Can't they give us a larger room than this?" she asked.

"No, my dear. It's the largest chamber in the house," replied Mr. Jenkins.

"We can never breathe in a closet like this. I feel suffocated already. How close and impure the air is!"

Mr. Jenkins raised two of the windows that were closed.

"Rag carpet! Ugh! I never could bear rag carpets!" now muttered Mrs. Jenkins, as she cast her eyes upon the floor. Then she looked toward the narrow, mountain-like bed, and, instantly rising, threw herself upon it, sinking, as she did so, some two feet among the feathers.

"A feather bed, as I live! Goodness! I can never sleep on that."

"We'll tell them to give us a matrass," said Mr. Jenkins, calmly.

"Ten chances to one if they have such a thing in the house," replied Mrs. Jenkins.

And so it proved; for the chances were all against the matrass.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" murmured poor Mrs. Jenkins. "If this is one of the pleasures of country boarding, and there are to be many more of the same kind, we will have a delightful time of it."

"We're here now, and must try and make the best we can of it," replied Mr. Jenkins. "You will soon get used

to little inconveniences. Health, pure air, and a free range for the children are the main things. We cannot expect all the comforts and elegancies of a city residence."

Mrs. Jenkins sighed. For a little while longer she remained half irresolute. She was seriously considering the propriety of going back forthwith to the city. Then she quietly laid aside her bonnet, and began to make preparations to remain. Nearly her first act was to go to the washstand for the purpose of laving her hands and face in cool water. But the pitcher was empty. No, not exactly empty; for in the bottom lay a dead bird, from which came a strong decaying odour as she lifted the pitcher from its place in the basin.

"Nice preparations for boarders," said the lady fretfully, "and a pleasant earnest of things to come. I wish you would go down and tell Hannah to bring up Mary and Edward."

Mr. Jenkins did as desired. From that time until tea was ready, Mrs. Jenkins was busy with the children and other little matters of preparation. During this period Tom and Dick had come in with red, sunburnt faces, and clothes soiled to an extent that almost agonized the mother, who was a woman, be it known, who had "an eye for dirt." They had found a running stream near by, and also a good-sized pond. Between damming the stream and sailing on old planks on the pond, they had managed to pass a delightful day, at the expense of a good deal of suffering on the part of their clothes.

At tea-time, Mrs. Crabtree looked grave. Her first impressions in regard to Mrs. Jenkins were not good. Mrs. Jenkins was quite as favourably impressed in regard to herself.

"Have you a mattress?" asked Mrs. Jenkins, while they yet sat at the tea-table.

"A mattress!" Mrs. Crabtree did not comprehend the meaning of the question.

"Yes. I never sleep on a feather bed."

"Oh! a mattress! No, ma'am. We haven't a mattress. But you'll find that a very nice, comfortable bed. It has in it over seventy pounds of the very best feathers."

"I would die before morning!" said Mrs. Jenkins, with

little effort to hide her feelings. "I will thank you to have the bed removed, and we will sleep on the sacking to-night. To-morrow we can have a mattress brought out."

"There is no sacking-bottom to the bed," replied Mrs. Crabtree. "It is corded."

"Corded!"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Oh dear! Then what shall we do? I'd rather sleep on the floor than on that feather bed."

"It's a good, clean feather bed, ma'am," said Mrs. Crabtree, an indignant flush in her face and an indignant tone in her voice. She did not yet fully comprehend the objection of Mrs. Jenkins.

"We do not in the least doubt that," said Mr. Jenkins, who saw that their landlady's mind was somewhat in the dark. The feather bed is all that one could desire; but we never sleep on any thing but a mattress, winter or summer. Perhaps you have a straw bed?"

"Oh yes. There is a good straw one under the feather bed."

"Just the thing!" replied Mr. Jenkins. "Take away the feather bed, and we'll do very well."

So that difficulty was settled.

The night that followed proved to be a most sultry one. The youngest child lay in a crib beside the bed, on which reclined—we will not say slept—Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins with another child. On the side next the crib were two windows; but neither of them could be left open, because the crib was not three feet from them, and what little air was stirring came from that quarter, and it was not safe to let it blow on little Mary, who was subject to croup. Into the other two windows, at the foot of the bed, which were partly raised, came not a breath to fan into something like living motion the sluggish air of the chamber.

Not for years had Mrs. Jenkins slept without a light in her chamber. But she was doomed to make the experiment on this occasion. Such a thing as an oil lamp there was not in the house. A long tallow candle was lit on retiring to bed, with the hope that it would burn all night. Twice had Mr. Jenkins been roused by his wife

from a transient doze, once to snuff this candle, and once to remove a fragment of wick that was causing it to "gutter" at a most alarming rate.

"I wish you would see what o'clock it is," said the restless lady, arousing her husband for the third time. "It can't be long from morning."

"It's just one o'clock," replied Mr. Jenkins, as he brought his watch to the candle.

"Only one o'clock! It will never be daylight!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins.

"Try and get to sleep," said Mr. Jenkins.

"Sleep! There isn't a wink of sleep in me. There! What is that?"

Mrs. Jenkins raised herself up as a bird flew in at the window, and commenced dancing about the room.

"It's a bat. Take care!" replied Mr. Jenkins. "Don't let it fall on your head. They bite terribly."

This was enough to cause Mrs. Jenkins to drop down as if shot, and bury her face in the clothes. Mr. Jenkins lay for a minute or two, watching the bird as it flew about the room. Then rising, he tried to drive it out. While engaged in this interesting employment, the bat darted against the candle, and instantly the room was in darkness. Here was a dilemma! There were no matches at hand, and Mrs. Jenkins was afraid to let her husband go down-stairs to relight the candle. To add to the perplexity of the moment, little Mary awoke and commenced crying for a drink of water. Feeling his way in the dark, Mr. Jenkins succeeded in finding the pitcher, and, after a further search of nearly a minute, made out to turn up a tumbler. Twice, during the time occupied in this effort, the bat swept so close to his face that its wings brushed his cheek. At length a glass of water was brought to the child's lips, and she ceased crying and commenced drinking. But only a mouthful or two had been taken, ere she pushed the glass away and spouted the water from her mouth, saying that there was something in the water. Eyes being of no use under the circumstances, Mrs. Jenkins thrust her fingers into the tumbler, and found, to her horror, as many as two or three bugs therein, about the size of grains of coffee.

"Oh, mercy!" she exclaimed, "Mary has swallowed a bug, as sure as the world! The tumbler is full of them."

At this Mary began to cry afresh—the words of her mother had frightened her—and she continued to cry for the next hour. That was a night long to be remembered by Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins. It seemed to them as if daylight would never come. Dripping with perspiration, and almost suffocated in the dark, close, sultry air, they lay murmuring over their discomfort until morning. As for Mrs. Jenkins, she declared, unequivocally, she would not remain in that place a day longer. But, after the sun had arisen, a sober consultation was held, in which all the *pros* and *cons* were fully discussed. The result was a decision to remain a week or two at least, and give the place a trial. But, in order to do this, it was determined that Mr. Jenkins should send out, on that very day, a mattress, gauze frames for the windows, to keep out bats and bugs at night, oil for a lamp, matches, and some dozen other articles that were now seen to be indispensable.

At breakfast-time the family met at the table in the small dining-room. Bread and butter, fried bacon, and coffee composed the meal. Mr. Crabtree was absent; he had started for the city with his marketing before daylight, taking with him all the fresh-laid eggs and new-made butter, which were to be served to a boarding-house with which he had a contract for the supply of these articles. The butter on the table was scarcely eatable; at which Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins somewhat wondered. As for the coffee, it was poor, watery stuff, and the "cream" with which Mrs. Crabtree sought to improve its quality was nothing more nor less than skim-milk.

The meal passed in silence, and then Mr. Jenkins started for the city. He had to walk half a mile in order to meet the stage. In the afternoon, having sent out the mattress and other things needed for their comfort, he left in the stage.

There were heavy masses of clouds in the west, which Mr. Jenkins did not observe until after leaving the city. He did not, therefore, provide himself with an umbrella. Blacker and blacker grew these clouds, and by the time

he had to leave the stage they had curtained the whole heavens. Mr. Jenkins, fearful of being caught in a summer shower, hurried on his way; but he had not gone half the distance from the turnpike to Mr. Crabtree's, before down came the rain in a perfect torrent. He sought the shelter of a tree, after getting soaked to the skin, and stood there for a whole hour. But still it rained on, while the lightning flashed vividly, and the thunder rolled with an almost incessant jar. At last, beginning to feel chilled in his wet garments, Mr. Jenkins concluded that it would be best for him to get home; so off he started, in the face of the driving storm, along a road now ankle deep in some places with mud.

On arriving at the house, Nero, who either did not know him, or affected ignorance on the subject, made a dash at him, as on a former occasion, and this time got a good mouthful out of his pantaloons before he was called off by Farmer Crabtree, who gave the dog a sound thrashing for his over-watchfulness. For this Mr. Jenkins was not forgiven by Nero, who rarely ever suffered him to get peaceably into the house on his daily return from the city.

That night was a more comfortable one for Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, as the storm cooled the atmosphere, and they had better sleeping arrangements than at first. But, on the next morning, Mr. Jenkins found himself suffering from an attack of rheumatism—an old friend of his, for whom he had no very particular regard.

It took over a week for the family of Mr. Jenkins to get sufficiently well acquainted with things around them to understand exactly their true position. By this time they had seen a little deeper into the economical arrangements of the Crabtrees; but not deep enough to enable them to comprehend why, being in the country, and on a farm, they should have so few of the luxuries confidently anticipated. But on this head they were in due time enlightened.

"I know the reason," said Tom, the oldest boy, to his mother, after they had been in the country about two weeks, "why we never have good butter."

"Well, what is the reason?" asked Mrs. Jenkins.

"They send it all to market."

"Not all. Some is kept back for the family."

"Indeed, then, and not a pound is kept back," said Tom. "Mr. Crabtree takes all they make to town, and sells it for thirty-five cents, and then buys butter for us at a quarter. Mrs. Crabtree says it's good enough for boarders."

"How do you know?" inquired Mrs. Jenkins.

"I heard her say so."

"Are you certain?"

"Indeed I am. And all the fresh eggs are taken to market, too. The fact is, they take every thing to market. You know the two nice pears I bought you the other day. Well, Mr. Crabtree scolded Dick and me like every thing because we knocked some of them from the tree, and said it was no better than stealing. Yesterday he stripped the tree, and to-day all the fruit was taken to market. It's too bad. I don't like it at all. I thought when I came to the country, I'd get plenty of fruit; but I've hardly had a taste."

When Mr. Jenkins came home that evening, his wife was able to enlighten him on the subject of bad butter.

"Can this really be true?" asked that gentleman, in an incredulous tone of voice. "Send their good butter to market and buy bad for us, when we are paying them twenty-five dollars a week? I'll see about that."

On the next morning, at breakfast-time, Mr. Jenkins said, after tasting the butter, and then replacing the small portion he had taken upon the butter-plate—

"The fact is, Mr. Crabtree, I can't eat your butter. You must have very bad grass, very bad cows, or else be very bad butter-makers."

The faces of both Mr. and Mrs. Crabtree coloured at this unexpected remark. They had good grass, good cows, and were good butter-makers, and they knew it; the allegation of Mr. Jenkins, therefore, touched them to the quick.

"This isn't our butter," was stammered out in some confusion by Mrs. Crabtree.

"Not your butter!" exclaimed Mr. Jenkins, in affected surprise. "Oh, I was not aware of that. Pray, then, let us have a taste of yours, for this is execrable stuff."

Mrs. Crabtree could do no less than order a print of her nice yellow butter to be brought upon the table.

"Ah! that is butter!" said Mr. Jenkins, as he tasted it.

The way nearly a pound print disappeared was distressing to the eyes of Mr. and Mrs. Crabtree.

After breakfast Jenkins took the farmer aside.

"Mr. Crabtree," said he, "how is it that you have been giving us such miserable butter, when your own is of good quality? I don't understand it."

"All my butter is engaged in the city," replied the farmer.

"It is?"

"Yes, sir; and I must serve my customers."

"And all your eggs, too?"

"Yes, sir."

"So I had begun to think, not having seen a fresh egg on the table since I have been here. All your cream is made into butter?"

"It is."

"I now understand why our coffee is so poor. Well, Mr. Crabtree, all I have to say is, there will have to be an immediate reform, or you will lose twenty-five dollars a week. Perhaps it pays you better to sell your butter and eggs than to feed them to your boarders. If so, go on with your system, and we will go back to the city. We pay you for the best of every thing, and the best we must have. So now you understand me."

There was, of course, quite a buzzing in the Crabtree hive. But when the farmer and his wife made a calculation of loss and gain on the butter-selling and butter-feeding operations, they wisely concluded to adopt the latter system.

After that the Jenkinses fared a little better. Still, as to real comfort, they had nothing of the article. In the daytime the sun poured his rays all around the little, unprotected farm-house, keeping Mrs. Jenkins and the younger children in-doors or confined to a narrow range without, and night shut them up in small, close rooms, where it seemed almost impossible to breathe. Once or twice every week Mr. Jenkins missed the stage, and had to walk in the hot sun to West Philadelphia for an omni-

bus. And every now and then he was drenched with rain in going from the stage to the farm-house. Dick and Tom were about the only ones who really enjoyed themselves, and they managed every day to get their clothes in a condition that completely horrified their mother.

Until the latter part of August this country comfort was endured, when, on returning from the city one evening, Mr. Jenkins found two of the children, Dick and Mary, quite sick. They had considerable fever, and Dick was a little out of his head. About a mile away lived a doctor, who was summoned immediately.

"What do you think ails them?" asked Mrs. Jenkins, after the doctor had examined the children.

"They have intermittent fever, I presume," replied the physician.

"Intermittent fever!" ejaculated Mrs. Jenkins.

"Intermittent fever!" said the father.

"No doubt of it. It is prevailing about here to a great extent," replied the doctor.

"Oh dear!" sighed Mrs. Jenkins. "Has it come to this? So much for country boarding!"

"It isn't always prudent to come into the country at this season," remarked the doctor.

"I had no idea that it was sickly about here," said Mr. Jenkins.

"It isn't ordinarily. But there is a good deal of intermittent and bilious fever just at this time."

"We must go back immediately!" said Mrs. Jenkins.

"Yes, immediately!" added her husband.

And so, on the next day, the Jenkinses made a precipitate flight to the city, with two sick children.

PART III.

The Sequel.

ONE of the hottest of August's hot days was that on which Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins returned home with their family. Their flight from the country took place, as did their flight from the city, late in the afternoon.

"Thank Heaven, that experiment is over!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins, as the carriage in which she had taken her seat began to move from the door of Farmer Crabtree.

"Country boarding! Save the mark!" muttered Mr. Jenkins, in an under tone.

"Oh, how glad I shall be to get home again with my poor children!" added Mrs. Jenkins. Dear Mary! How sick she is! Ah me! I'm afraid we shall pay dear for our experiment."

"A change of air and good medical attendance will bring all right again, I hope," remarked Mr. Jenkins.

"I have my fears," said Mrs. Jenkins, with a sigh. "Mrs. Wheeler's Milly got the chills year before last somewhere up the Schuylkill, and was sick all winter. Poor little fellow! He suffered a great deal. Just to think that our children, who have always been so healthy, should get such a miserable disease!"

"If this is summer boarding," said Mr. Jenkins, breaking the silence a little while afterward, "save me from a second trial of its pleasures!"

"Such a life as I have lived for the last six weeks! Gracious! What would induce me to go over it again?" remarked Mrs. Jenkins. "Shut up from all society in that little den, upon which the sun poured down from morning till night with melting fervour, and deprived of



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almost every thing made necessary to my comfort by habit, I have merely endured existence. And then, we have all lived like heathens. For six weeks neither I nor the children have seen the inside of a church. As for Tom and Dick, they have run perfectly wild, and learned more low slang, and, I fear, vice, from the farm hands and boys about the neighbourhood than they would have learned in the city for years."

Mr. Jenkins sighed at this strong array of evils attendant on their summer-boarding experiment. Nor had he escaped without some pretty serious inroads upon his personal comfort, to say nothing of the return of his old friend the rheumatism, brought back by more than one drenching in a thunder-shower. Quite as glad was he as his wife to quit the scene of their rural felicity.

"Oh! this is delightful!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins, sitting down near an open window in a large, airy chamber, soon after arriving at home. Hot as the day had been, and sultry as the atmosphere still remained, there was yet a cool draft of air passing through the chambers, in one of which Mrs. Jenkins was seated. "How foolish we were to give up real comfort like this!" she added.

"And for what?" said her husband.

"Yes, and for what? You may well ask that question."

"Oh, Mrs. Jenkins!" cried the nurse at this moment, in a voice of alarm, "what is the matter with Mary?"

Mary's chill had come on just as the family was leaving Farmer Crabtree's. It was more violent than the preceding ones, and was succeeded by a very high fever, which, commenced rising before they reached the city.

The startling words of the nurse caused Mrs. Jenkins to go hurriedly into the adjoining chamber, where Mary lay upon a bed.

"What is the matter?" she asked anxiously.

"Oh, Mrs. Jenkins! See how she looks!" said the nurse. "Her eyes are set, and she keeps twisting her face and working her body so strangely.

"Oh, mercy! Mr. Jenkins! Run for the doctor, quickly! What is the matter?"

Mr. Jenkins, who had hurried in after his wife, exclaimed, as soon as he looked at the child—

"Bless me! She's in convulsions!"

"Convulsions! Oh, dear! What shall we do? Oh, Mr. Jenkins, run, run for the doctor!"

And the frightened mother, who had never seen a child in convulsions, wrung her hands like one distracted.

"Get her into a hot bath as quickly as possibly," said Mr. Jenkins, assuming a calm exterior, although he felt much alarmed, "and I will go for the doctor. Make the water as hot as your hand can bear it, and keep her in for a good while. I will be back very soon."

And saying this, Mr. Jenkins hurried away. A quarter of an hour elapsed before he returned with a physician; and full three hours passed ere the dreadful spasms that convulsed the frame of the child subsided.

On the next day, the chill returned, succeeded by another raging fever. With an anxious heart did the mother sit by Mary's bedside, hour after hour watching eagerly the little sufferer's face, and trembling all the while lest there should be another return of convulsions. Happily there was no recurrence of these frightful symptoms; but the poor child's system was so shocked by the first attack that she remained in a partial stupor for two or three days, giving rise to the fear that her brain had received some permanent injury. This, however, was not the case. Still the fever held on with a clinging tenacity, that for a time defied all the efforts of medicine. Week after week, both in the case of Dick and Mary, there was a daily return of the chill and fever, until the natural strength of good constitutions began to fail under the pressure of disease and the debilitating effects of strong and active remedies.

Frost, so long and anxiously looked for, as having power to break the chills, came; but the only difference in the state of the young sufferers was, that a tertian ague took the place of daily chills and fevers. This continued until Christmas, when, with a feeling of thankfulness that they could not express, the parents saw the fever leave their children. But troublesome consequences remained. Poor little Mary was swollen around her waist to a third beyond her usual size; and the doctor gave Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins the not very consoling information that one or

two years might pass before she was entirely recovered from the bad effects that too often follow attacks of ague and fever. Moreover, both she and Dick would be liable to a return of the disease in the ensuing fall.

Alone with the children did not rest the evil consequences of this country-boarding experiment. Rheumatic twitches, aches, and pains, the result of sundry exposures to drenching rains, took a more serious character in the case of Mr. Jenkins as cold weather made its approaches; and before winter was fairly over, he had to take his place in his chamber, and endure the pangs of a four weeks' visitation of inflammatory rheumatism.

"Are you going to the country this summer?" said a friend to Mr. Jenkins, early in June last.

"For what?" asked Jenkins, rather tartly.

"Why, for comfort."

"Comfort!"

"Yes. For comfort during the hot months."

"Yes. I engaged a place at a snug little farm-house yesterday."

"Hope you may find more comfort than we did last year," said Jenkins.

"Ain't you going?"

"Not we. One season cured us of our country-boarding aspirations; and you will be cured ere September, if you get as snugly fixed as we were at farmer Crabtree's."

"Crabtree's! There's where we are going," said the friend.

"Is it, indeed! Well, all I can say is that you'd better stay at home."

At this, the friend had a dozen or more questions to ask; and Mr. Jenkins was in no way choice of his words in answering them. We have only to add that farmer Crabtree was not successful in filling his house with boarders last summer.

Of course, all who go into the country are not so thoroughly disappointed as were Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, though few are fortunate enough to realize their pleasant anticipations. Going away from home for comfort, either in summer or winter, is not the most certain way of securing the object desired.



LARGE STORIES.

"WONDERFUL!" exclaimed one of a group of listeners, who were hanging on the words of a moustached, whiskered, out-at-the-elbows-looking fellow, who had evidently seen something of the world, though clearly to no great advantage to himself. "As large as your fist?"

"Yes, sir!" replied the relater.

"Solid gold?"

"Solid and pure as an ingot. Why, I saw a man from one of the 'diggins' on Feather River, with a raw-hide

sack that would hold half a bushel, full of lumps that he had gathered in a little over ten days; not one of which was smaller than a walnut."

"You don't say so!" fell from two or three voices.

"It is just what I do say."

"Had you any luck in digging?" inquired one.

"Certainly I had. I staid only a month in the 'dig-gins,' and came down to Sacramento with over twenty thousand dollars' worth of the real stuff."

"Twenty thousand!"

"Yes, and over."

"What did you do with your gold?" asked one.

Whiskerendo shrugged his shoulders, compressed suddenly his lips, and elevated his eyebrows.

"Come easy, go easy;" said he. "It was spent in a month after I reached the sea-coast."

"What did you do then?"

"Got a situation as clerk in a store, at three hundred dollars a month."

"Good wages," remarked one of the listeners.

"First rate. Grand place, that California. A man's a fool to plod out his life here."

"So I should think, provided you are not romancing," said one of the company.

"Romancing! There's no need to romance, my friend," returned the adventurer. "The simple truth is wonderful enough. In fact, the half has never been told; and, I believe, never will be told. The riches of that El Dorado are scarcely yet opened. Take my advice, every one of you, and make all haste for this golden region. There is room enough left for thousands to work and secure untold riches."

Among the listeners was an old fellow named Grimes, who had said nothing, but who had occasionally let his eye rest upon the talker with a half-sarcastic, half-comical twinkle.

"See here, my friend," said California, drawing up a chair to the table at which this personage was sitting, and addressing him in a familiar way, "why don't you pull up stakes, and travel off to this land of promise? A man's a fool to vegetate in this part of the country, pur-

suings the vanishing shadow of a fortune, when he has only to step across the isthmus, glide up the coast, and fill his pockets with a hundred or two thousands of dollars in a few months."

"That can be easily done, can it?" said the old fellow.

"Pho! I washed ten thousand dollars out of a few bushels of sand in a single day."

"You did?"

"Certainly. Any body can do it."

"Then why didn't you stay there, my friend?" coolly asked the other.

Whiskerendo shrugged his shoulders, arched his eyebrows, pursed his lips, and made sundry other dumb motions.

"You seem to be pretty well out at the elbows, and pretty well out in the pocket," continued the other. "Where are all these heaps of shining gold you talk so much about?"

"Come easy, go easy;" and California shrugged his shoulders again. "Spent ten thousand dollars in Sacramento city in a fortnight. Great place, that."

"Why didn't you go back to the mines again?"

"Didn't like the company there. Horrible place!"

"Oho! And yet, a moment since, you pictured it as the most desirable spot on the earth! But why didn't you stay in Sacramento, on a salary of three hundred dollars a month, eh? Tell us that, my friend. You can't make three hundred dollars a year, I fancy, in these diggings!"

"Do you mean to insult me, sir?" exclaimed California, at this, growing fierce, and beginning to finger his moustache. "I never permit a man to insult me."

"I only asked a very natural question," coolly replied the interrogator, without moving, or taking his eyes from the other's face. "You're not the first man I've seen from the gold region, who came back with empty pockets and large stories. I always ask such adventurers why they didn't stay there, but have yet to receive an answer to my question. Pray, sir, gratify my curiosity."

California couldn't stand this; the more especially as one and another of the group he had been edifying,

repeated the interrogation. So he took refuge under a torrent of bad language, and retired from the company in high indignation.

"I can tell you why he left," said one, who had, until now, been silent.

"Why?" "Why?" was repeated all around.

"You know him, do you not?"

"Yes." "Yes." "Charles ——."

The man drew a letter from his pocket and read—

"You remember Charles ——. Well, he left in the last steamer for Panama, and took with him some three or four thousand dollars in gold dust, belonging to a friend. He's a bad man, and conducted himself scandalously while here. It would hardly do for him to return."

"Hum-m-m!" "Oho!" "Aha!" Such were the low ejaculations that followed this little piece of information. "That explains his coming back."

California never again appeared in that company, nor repeated his large stories in the presence of old Grimes.

“ANY THING OVER TO-DAY?”

JENKINS was an honest, simple-minded man, little versed in the ways of the world. Being without capital, and having a salary, as clerk in a mercantile house, only sufficient for the support of himself and those dependent on him, no thought of going into business entered his mind. A clerk he was, and a clerk he expected to remain. One after another of his fellow-quilldrivers had broken through their cerements, and arisen into the station and dignity of merchants; but he was still at the desk, and anticipated no such change for himself. One day, a young man named Tompkins, who had started out in life two or three years before, said to him—

“Jenkins, my old friend, why don’t you go into business? You are wasting the best years of your existence.”

Jenkins shrugged his shoulders, and half sighed the word

“Capital!”

“You don’t need any capital,” replied Tompkins.

Jenkins elevated his eyebrows with a look of wonder.

“Credit is capital,” said Tompkins.

“Oh! But where’s the credit to come from?”

“There are plenty of men who will sell you goods. I’ve never found any difficulty. I started without a hundred dollars, and am now doing business to the amount of fifty thousand dollars a year.”

“So much?”

“Yes, every dollar of it; and, if my good luck goes on, I’ll do seventy thousand dollars worth next year.”

“And your only capital was your credit?”



Anything over To-day?



"I hadn't a dollar in hard cash."

"Possible?"

"It's truth."

"You bought on four and six months?"

"Yes."

"But a stock of goods can't be turned in six months. That's admitted on all hands."

"A good deal can be turned if a man pushes his business."

"Suppose sixteen thousand out of twenty are turned—and that's a liberal calculation—how are the four thousand to be made up?"

"You must borrow."

"Borrow?"

"Yes."

"It's easy enough to say 'Borrow,' but who's to lend?"

"Every body lends. You are short to-day, and your neighbour is over—he lends you. To-morrow he is short and you are over, and you lend him. Hundreds of thousands of dollars circulate in this way."

"But suppose my neighbour isn't over when I happen to be short?" said Jenkins.

"Go to another neighbour. Somebody will be over. I have never found any difficulty."

"All that's too temporary, and a little too *risky* for me. The borrowed amount must go on increasing until the sum becomes unmanageable."

"By that time," replied Tompkins, "your credit will be so well established that you can get an accommodation in bank. Money in business, you know, is always worth its interest."

"Yes, I am aware of that."

"Borrowed capital is therefore just as good as if it were your own, for all business purposes."

Jenkins assented to this, although he didn't exactly feel that it was true.

"Can this be readily done?" he inquired.

"Certainly," was the confident answer. "I can do it."

"I'm afraid I couldn't," said Jenkins.

"Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know; but that's my impression."

"Nonsense; you can do it as well as any one else. You're too timid. Nothing venture, nothing gain. Here you are, wearing out your life on a salary of a thousand dollars, when you might just as well be making two or three thousand. Use your abilities for your own benefit, not for the good of others, to be turned out to die, like an old horse, when you get old."

A few interviews like this with Tompkins, who manifested a warm interest for his old friend, finally overcame all objections in the mind of Jenkins, and he became possessed of go-into-business-and-get-rich spirits. Credit was capital. That was an admitted axiom. And, with capital, any fool could make money. That was its twin brother. Jenkins found less difficulty in obtaining goods on a six months' credit than he had anticipated. He had a quiet, thoughtful air about him, and his old employers gave him credit for being a man of the most honest purposes, and a good knowledge of business.

During the first six months Jenkins was able to discount many of his own notes. This made his credit A No. 1 with a good many of the wholesale men from whom he bought, and they congratulated him that he was getting on so well; but, at the expiration of six months, when about six or seven thousand dollars fell due in the course of a couple of weeks, Jenkins found his vessel passing from a smooth sea into troubled waters.

"Any thing over to-day, Jenkins?" or, "Will you have any thing over to-morrow?" had been sounded in his ears half a dozen times daily for the last three or four months; and he had made temporary loans of small sums again and again to his neighbours. Tompkins had been a liberal borrower. He was on the street daily. It was now Jenkins's turn to ask a reciprocation of favours, which had, thus far, been all on one side.

For the first notes which fell due, to the amount of two thousand five hundred dollars, Jenkins was prepared; but one morning he found himself with a thousand dollars to pay, and nothing in bank. The young merchant felt sober. This large amount must be borrowed—but could he borrow it? That was the doubtful question. Moreover, he felt a natural repugnance to asking favours of

the kind, and his heart sank in him at the very thought of doing so; but in no other way could the money be raised. Temporary loans must be had until the regular sales brought all right again. Business was very good, and profits fair. The prospect ahead was encouraging. The present difficulty surmounted, and all would be smooth sailing again.

Naturally enough, Jenkins' first visit was to his friend.

"Any thing over to-day, Tompkins?" he asked, confidently—for here he fully counted on important aid. The smile on the face of his friend instantly faded.

"Not a cent, Jenkins, I'm sorry to say," was the reply. "I'm short two thousand myself, and fully counted on you for five hundred."

"I must raise a thousand to-day," said Jenkins, in a husky voice, and with every sign of disappointment visible. "I fully counted on you."

"If I should possibly have any thing over at two o'clock you will be most welcome to it," said Tompkins; "but you musn't depend on me. No doubt you will raise what you want easily enough. Have you tried Smith?"

"Not yet."

"You've accommodated him?"

"Yes, twenty times."

"Then go to him. I think he's flush to-day."

To the store of Smith, Jenkins proceeded; but not with the easy confidence he experienced in calling upon Tompkins. The first disappointment had dashed his feelings. Smith was a spruce, active little fellow, who advanced to meet Jenkins, rubbing his hands as the latter came in.

"Ah, Jenkins, how are you—how are you?" said he, smiling like a prima donna. "I was just about calling in to see you. Any thing over to-day?"

Now this was almost too much for poor human nature; or, at least, for that of Mr. Jenkins. His countenance, which had lighted up, fell; and he stammered out—

"No, no, not a cent. The f-f-fact is, I'm on a borrowing tramp to-day, and have come to ask a lift from you."

"Indeed! I'm sorry I can't help you. Why, I thought you one of the most comfortable men in the street."

"So I have been. Never before asked for a dollar since I was in business. But several heavy payments are crowded into this and next week, and I shall be short for a time. It won't last long, however."

"Wish I could help you, Jenkins. My will is good," said Smith; "but I must take care of number one to-day. If I have any thing over to-morrow you shall be welcome to it with all my heart. Have you tried Jones?"

"No."

"Call on him. He had in three or four customers from the West yesterday, and I think they left him, as they say, 'a right smart chance' of money. He's borrowed from you, I know."

"Yes, often."

"He'll help you. Call on him."

"Any thing over to-day?" asked Jenkins, meekly, of Jones, whom he found at his desk, looking particularly dismal.

"No, not a red cent," sharply returned Jones, frowning as he spoke, and glancing involuntarily toward a rack full of bank notices. He had been meditating for half an hour before Jenkins came in, with these full in view; which fact will account for his unamiable temper.

Jenkins turned away without speaking, and went back to his own store. He had never had just such feelings as now oppressed him. A thousand dollars were to be paid in bank before three o'clock, and he had, thus far, nothing toward meeting the obligation. Moreover, three thousand dollars additional fell due in the course of a week, all of which must be met, or he would fail in business. "Fail!" How the word, as it formed itself in his thoughts, made him tremble inwardly.

"Where is the money to come from?" he sighed, as he seated himself in his store. For ten minutes he remained inactive; then, suddenly rising, he murmured—

"But this won't do. It must come from somewhere. I will try Wilkins; he's had many favours of me."

To Wilkins's store Jenkins repaired.

"Any thing over to-day?" he asked, betraying in his voice and countenance the extremity of his need.

"Well—I don't—know," replied Wilkins, thoughtfully and deliberately. "Let me see."

And, opening his fire-closet, he took out a large pocket-book, and commenced examining its contents.

"How much do you want?" he at length asked.

"Three or four hundred dollars."

"Is it to go in bank?"

"Yes."

"If uncurrent money would answer, I might help you some."

"How near is it?"

"Virginia."

"Two per cent. discount."

"Yes; but you can have it for a couple of weeks, if it's any accommodation."

"How much have you?"

"Three hundred and fifty dollars."

"Hold on to it, if you please, for an hour or two; and if I can't make up what I want I will accept your offer."

"Very well; it is at your service. I would do better for you, if I could; but I just let Tompkins have all my current funds."

Half a dozen more applications were made during the next hour; and all poor Jenkins could raise was two hundred dollars, which must be returned on the next day by twelve o'clock. This sum, with the three hundred and fifty dollars uncurrent money, on which he would have to lose seven dollars in discount, left him short four hundred and fifty dollars.

It was near one o'clock, and he had already gone the entire rounds—so far as those who had, on former occasions, taken the liberty to borrow of him were concerned. As a money-hunter, he must now extend his walks farther. He must go to those who had never come to him.

There was, only a few doors from Mr. Jenkins, a retail dealer in the same line, who had been one of his old employer's best customers. As a clerk, Jenkins had frequently sold him goods, and waited upon him for the settlement of many bills. Peters—that was the man's name—had always been very polite to Jenkins, both before and since his entrance into business; and Jenkins,

in consequence, liked Peters, and thought him very much of a gentleman. In his extremity—one o'clock having arrived, and there being yet four hundred and fifty dollars to make up—he determined to try Peters. At first thought he shrunk from doing so; but necessity spurred him to the act.

As Jenkins placed his foot within the store of Peters, his heart almost failed him; but it was too late now to turn back, so he advanced. Peters was standing at a desk in the back part of the store, busily engaged in making certain calculations on a small slip of paper. Two or three parcels of bank notes were lying before him, and near these were several bank notices. The fact was, Peters was himself short; and whenever that was the case he, being of a nervous temperament, was never very amiable. He had just discovered a little error in his calculations, which showed him even worse off than he had believed, by several hundred dollars, when a faltering voice near him pronounced his name. He turned quickly, and, as his sharp eyes and knit brows were encountered by Jenkins, the latter seemed almost to shrink into himself as he instinctively took off his hat.

"Mr. Jenkins," said Peters, not relaxing a muscle.

"Mr. Peters, how are you?"

"So so."

Still the brows were unbent.

"Any thing over to-day?" faltered Jenkins.

"No!"

That "No" must have been heard, to form a correct idea of the emphatic force with which it was uttered. Poor Jenkins staggered back a pace or two, and then hastily retired.

"The tenth time I've had to say that in the last hour," muttered Peters, savagely, as he turned to his desk.

This last experience in borrowing from those who were "over," settled the matter with Jenkins. It would have been about as easy to have forced him up to a cannon's mouth as to have induced him to make another application of the kind.

"I'd better fail and be done with it," said he to himself, as he went back with hurried strides to his store;

but the idea of failing became more and more terrible to him the nearer the view he took.

"I must prevent it, if I can." This, which was thought rather than uttered, marked the reaction in his mind.

"But how, how, how?" And he paced the floor backward and forward half a dozen times.

"Yes, yes, I'll do that. It's a straw, but I'll catch at it." And, so saying, he started forth again. This time he went to the store of his old employers, and asked an interview with the senior member of the firm, a kind-hearted, liberal man.

"Mr. B——," said Jenkins, as soon as they were alone, speaking frankly and without embarrassment, "I've committed a great blunder."

"In what?"

"In going into business."

"How so?"

"I hadn't a dollar of capital."

"I thought you had saved something."

"No; I went into business on the sole basis of a credit."

"That *was* a blunder."

"So I have discovered; but, unfortunately, when it is too late to retrieve my error."

"You can't pay your notes, I presume."

"Not out of my current business. I must borrow."

"A poor dependence, Jenkins."

"So I have found, this day, to my grief and disappointment. I have been trying for nearly five hours to get a thousand dollars, but nobody has any thing to spare; so I must let my paper lie over, and make a failure of it."

"That won't do, Jenkins," said Mr. B——.

"I'd rather fail twenty times than keep up a half dead and alive business existence by 'shinning it.' No, no; that won't suit me, no how. One day's experience is enough. How people stand it who run about daily from nine o'clock until half-past two, to get money to meet their notes, is more than I can tell. It would kill me in a month. I'd rather fail at once, and be done with it. Failure must come at last."

"Well, what do you want to say to me on the subject?" asked B——.

"Simply," replied Jenkins, "to call my store yours, and me your clerk, for a few months, until the business can be settled up—you, in the mean time, paying the notes that fall due, in order to keep all concerned free from the loss that inevitably follows a failure in business. There's enough to make you perfectly safe."

"You are certain of that?"

"Oh yes; I've made very fair profits, and lived frugally. You can furnish goods from your own store to keep up the stock while I'm selling off what is now on hand. In this way you will be able to more than pay the expenses of the store, and bring all out safely in the end."

"I must have a little time to think about this, Jenkins," said B——. "I wish you had mentioned the subject a week or two ago, so that I could have looked into the affair before your extremity came. You want a thousand dollars to-day?"

"Yes."

B—— sat and thought for some three or four minutes.

"You must have it, I suppose," said he, at length. "I don't like these failures in business. Their reaction upon trade is bad. I'll give you a check for a thousand dollars to-day. Pay your notes, and then go to work and get up a statement of your exact condition. If it all looks right, perhaps—but no matter what. Do as I wish, and let me see you to-morrow."

A heavy weight was suddenly rolled from the feelings of Jenkins. He felt as light as a feather as he went back to his store, holding tightly in his hand a check for one thousand dollars.

On the next day, after a long interview with Mr. B——, who had always felt a friendly interest in Jenkins, it was decided to continue the business, B—— to be a silent partner, and furnish a certain amount of capital. That settled the fortunes of the young man. He is still in business, and doing well. While Tompkins and dozens of others like him are on the street, daily, from nine till half-past two, as eager money-hunters, you will find him

at his counter, attending to customers, or at the auctions, ready to secure any good bargains that may happen to offer. And you will, moreover, find him a prosperous merchant, when Tompkins, and eight out of ten of such able "financiers," are driven under, and the ripples on the surface of trade that marked the place of their disaster are no longer to be seen.

To start in business with only credit for a capital, is to lean upon a broken reed. Thousands have learned this to their sorrow.

THROWING DUST IN PEOPLE'S EYES.

THERE are many ways in which this is done—we mean throwing dust in people's eyes. In all the varied walks of life, from the leaders of political parties down to the scavengers who clean the streets, a certain set of individuals find especial delight in the work. In most cases, it is the hand of self-interest that throws the dust, and persons are blinded in order that they may not see the false moves about to be made against them.

It generally happens that your dust-throwing fraternity are, in the end, pretty well understood; and those who have once been blinded, manage to keep at least one eye clear, and fixed intently upon them. In a word, throwing dust may do very well for a time, but, like all evil work, it has its day and its hour. In the end, more is lost than gained.

“Aping their betters,” but without the motive of self-interest, and in the mere wantonness of ill-nature, your street-scavengers manage to do a pretty large share in the work of throwing dust in people's eyes, and their mode of doing it is of the most literal character. If the day happens to be windy, and you see one of this industrious fraternity approaching a box, barrel, or basket of dry coal-ashes, take our advice and cross the street, for the moment eschewing all dainty regard for flag-stones. In all cases of this kind, we are clear in the opinion that discretion is the better part of valour, and practise on the rule invariably. Even a soiled boot is to be preferred to dust in the eyes.

Patrick Mooney—he was, probably, third cousin to

CRADLE.

WATT & Co.

Throwing just in people's eyes.

WATT & Co.

Peter Mulrooney, who did, or, rather, who did not sell Mr. Urban's strawberry cow; though Patrick was an ill-natured boy, compared with Peter—Patrick Mooney had been six months in "Amereky," and in that short space of time had made the discovery that we are all lords here, and that he was as good as anybody, and a little better, too, if the truth were known. So Patrick, in his independence, not only stuck out his elbows so far that they sadly annoyed other people's ribs, but even ventured, occasionally, to give said elbows a sort of an outward flying motion, by which the ribs aforesaid were rather severely bruised. Of course, Patrick had to take the consequences; but he did not seem to grow much wiser for all that. One or two good places were lost because the independent citizen asserted, as was thought, rather too broadly his independence, and he finally came down to the necessity of accepting the office of City Collector—of ashes.

Patrick was rather humiliated by this fall of a man who was "as good as anybody;" but he soon saw that he had it in his power to be revenged on society for the wrong he sustained at its hands; and revenge in just the way that suited his direct aims and purposes. He could throw dust in people's eyes to his heart's content, and well did he do his work.

But emptying ash-pans and ash-barrels did not yield a very handsome income for the somewhat ambitious Mooney, and he kept on the look-out for some more desirable occupation.

"Pathrick," said Mrs. Mooney, one evening, to her husband, on his return home from his day's work—"Ise got news for yees. Andy Muckleroy's dead."

"Andy Muckleroy, is it, indade! Faix! and it's an ill wind that blows nobody good. He's lost a grand place."

"And ye must thry and get it, Pathrick."

"Dad! and I'm just the boy to try. I'll be made up if I can get the situation."

"Ye doesn't know Musther Blakely?"

"No; but I've got friends. Dad! but I'll go about it bright and early the morrow mornin'."

So, early on the next day, Patrick ran around among a few friends, and got them to sign a recommendation, preparatory to his application for the place made vacant by the death of Mr. Blakely's porter. With this he called at the merchant's store about nine o'clock, but was not so fortunate as to find him in. He stated his object, however, to the principal clerk, who gave him some encouragement.

"Leave your paper with me," said that individual, "and call again about three o'clock. You will be certain to find Mr. Blakely here at that time."

So Patrick Mooney retired, and went about his work of collecting ashes. He was unusually elated at the prospect of a speedy elevation above his present grade in society, which, it must be owned, had never been very flattering to his vanity; and this state of mental excitement caused him to throw his ashes about with an emphasis that kept the vicinity in which he happened to be in a perfect cloud of dust. Wo to the pedestrian, male or female, who happened to be to the leeward of Patrick, when he discharged the contents of an ash-pan into his cart; and, it cannot be denied, that he managed to make the contents of each box or pan do, to its full extent, the annoying duty he desired it to perform. Of course, Patrick did not *seem* to be aware of the blinded eyes and bedusted garments that followed in his wake, but he was keenly alive to the whole performance, and enjoyed it amazingly.

While thus employed, Mooney observed a well-dressed man approaching, and resolved to give his glossy black coat and shining hat a fine powdering. So he poised a tub of ashes in his hands and waited until he had him just in the wind, then dexterously throwing the contents into the air, he had the satisfaction of seeing a large portion blown directly into the face and over the person of the handsomely-dressed pedestrian. The man stopped, and after rubbing his eyes clear, looked steadily at the Irishman, who could not keep back the chuckle that was in his heart. Angry words were on his lips; but he restrained them and passed on.

Punctually at three o'clock, Mooney was at the store of Mr. Blakely.

"Is the jontilman in?" he asked of the clerk he had seen in the morning.

"You will find him back in his office," was answered.

"Has he seen my racamindation?" inquired Mooney.

"He has."

"He hasn't ony one engaged yet?"

"No."

"Do ye think he will take me?"

"We want a man immediately, and I think your chance is good. But, step back and see Mr. Blakely yourself."

With hat in hand, and a face all meekness, Patrick Mooney presented himself to the merchant. But what was his surprise to find himself in the presence of the man in whose face and over whose person he had but a few hours before scattered ashes in the most wanton and outrageous manner. The recognition was mutual.

"Well, sir?" Mr. Blakely spoke in a quick, indignant voice.

"Me name is Pathrick Mooney, y'r honour," stammered the Irishman in much confusion. "Yee's wants a—a—porther, sir, in the place of Andy Muckleroy. I left my racamindation the morning."

"I don't want you, sir," returned the merchant, controlling himself, and partly turning from the applicant as he spoke. "A man that don't know his place as a scavenger, will not be likely to know it as a porter."

The Irishman retired something wiser than when he came in. It was, to him, the turning of a new leaf in the book of human life. He is still a scavenger, but has had quite enough of throwing dust in people's eyes, and rarely indulges in the sport.

THE PUNCTUAL MAN.

MR. JENKINS was a punctual man—a very punctual man. He was not only up to time in every thing, but usually a little in advance of time. Of such a thing as being too late for an engagement, no one ever knew him to be guilty. On the other hand, Mrs. Jenkins had very little regard to the passage of time. Ask Mr. Jenkins what o'clock it was at any period of the day, and his answer, promptly given, and without consulting his gold lever, would rarely vary ten minutes from the real time. Ask Mrs. Jenkins the same question, and if she came within two hours of it, the fact would be remarkable.

“Now, my dear, do hurry! We shall be too late.”

Never did Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins go upon a journey, or attend church or party, without a dozen repetitions of this admonition, mildly urged in the beginning, but, in a nervous, impatient tone of voice, ere the lingering spouse deemed her person all in trim for the contemplated movement. In most cases, even with all the punctual husband's efforts to bring his wife up to time, but little advance was ever gained. Service had usually commenced ere they reached the church on Sunday, notwithstanding Mr. Jenkins's nervous horror of disturbing by an untimely entrance a worshipping assembly, and notwithstanding his weekly repetition of—

“Now do, my dear, try and be ready in time to-day.”

They were usually among the last at a tea-party; and upon them rested the guilt of disturbing the temper, wearing out the patience, and spoiling the oysters of the fair hostess. More than once had the prophecy—



The Punctual Man.



"We'll be too late for the steamboat," met a literal fulfilment.

One would naturally think that frequent experiences of this kind must work a change. Far from it. It was just as natural for Mrs. Jenkins to take no note of time, as for her husband to be noting it all the while.

Last summer they decided on a trip to Boston, and after all needful preparation the day arrived that was to witness their departure.

"Come, dear!" said Mr. Jenkins, just as day began to dawn. "It's time to get up. We shall be late."

"Late! It's only a little past four o'clock, and the boat doesn't leave until nine."

And Mrs. Jenkins, who had been aroused from a pleasant slumber, composed herself for another nap.

"Come! come! We shall be late."

Mr. Jenkins spoke now in a more earnest voice, for the first rays of the uprisen sun were streaming in at the chamber window.

"Plenty of time," returned Mrs. Jenkins, showing no very strong inclination to rise.

Mr. Jenkins, who was up and partly dressed, now bethought himself of consulting his watch, when to his surprise he found that it was full an hour later than he had supposed it to be.

"Come! come!" said he, impatiently. "It is nearly half-past six o'clock."

"Oh no," returned his wife.

"It is then, and no mistake. See for yourself!" and he held the gold lever before her eyes.

"I declare! I had no idea that it was so late."

Mrs. Jenkins sprung from the bed and commenced dressing herself hurriedly. Twice the bell rang for breakfast before she was ready to obey the summons. But at length she took her way to the dining-room, and, much to her husband's relief, she left the table in full time to finish all needful preparations for the journey.

The breakfast scene, which finally ended so much to Mr. Jenkins's satisfaction, is worthy of a passing note.

Mr. Jenkins received his cup of coffee from the hand of his wife with a nervous jerk, and in bringing it down

upon the table beside him, managed to spill a third of it upon the white cloth. Then, in putting his cup too eagerly to his lips, he scalded his mouth.

"Here! give me some cream. This coffee is as hot as fire!" he exclaimed, as he handed back his cup.

More cream was supplied, and then the cup of coffee was emptied at a single draught.

The work of breaking an egg and pouring out its contents came next in order. Usually, Mr. Jenkins could perform this delicate operation with considerable skill. On the present occasion he spilled a portion over the side of his egg-cup, soiled his fingers, and made "such a time of it," that he pushed egg and cup from him with an impatient—

"What a mess I'm making of it!"

Mr. Jenkins next attacked the toast, and bolted a couple of slices in a twinkling. Having done which, he drew forth his watch, to consult it, and see how the time was passing.

"We must hurry," said he, involuntarily. "Time goes quickly."

"Well, I declare," returned Mrs. Jenkins, "you're the most nervous, impatient man, I ever saw! Now do eat your breakfast. There is plenty of time."

But Mr. Jenkins arose and walked the floor of the dining-room until his wife had concluded her morning meal.

At half-past eight the carriage was to be at the door. The trunks were strapped, and Mr. Jenkins ready for the removal some time before that period; and to Mrs. Jenkins's credit be it spoken, she was ready to the minute.

"That man ought to be here," said Mr. Jenkins, as the hand of his gold lever approached the figure four. "I don't like this putting off things until the last moment."

And he went to the door and stood for some time looking down the street. But no carriage appeared in sight. Then he returned into the house, and walked the parlour floor for a minute and a half, at the end of which time he drew forth his watch for another consultation. Five minutes more, and it would be half-past eight o'clock.

"If he should disappoint me!" said Mr. Jenkins, nervously.

"Oh, he'll be here," returned Mrs. Jenkins, with much composure. "Don't be uneasy."

"But I am uneasy. I'm almost certain the man will disappoint us. I wish I'd taken his number."

"What good would that have done?" asked Mrs. Jenkins, calmly.

"I'd have him before the Mayor."

Mr. Jenkins went to the door again, and gazed anxiously down the street. No carriage was in sight.

"Half-past eight!" he ejaculated, coming into the parlour where Mrs. Jenkins sat all ready for departure. "What is to be done?"

"Don't feel uneasy. I am certain he will be here," said Mrs. Jenkins. "He can drive down easily in a quarter of an hour. So there is plenty of time to spare."

"No, there isn't plenty of time to spare. Besides, I told him to be here by half-past eight, and not a minute later."

Five, ten, fifteen minutes went stealing by, and yet no carriage appeared. The reader may imagine the state of mind into which Mr. Jenkins was thrown.

But a quarter of an hour remained ere the steamboat would leave the wharf. Fortunately for Mr. Jenkins, a porter came by just at this juncture, with his empty wheelbarrow.

"Here, good fellow!" cried Jenkins; "are you engaged?"

"No, sir," was answered.

"Then come in quickly and get my trunks. The carriage has disappointed me, and I must be at the New York boat by nine o'clock."

The porter obeyed with alacrity. In a few minutes he was on his way, with the trunks, toward Walnut street wharf, and Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, the former with carpet-bag in hand, hurrying after him. But the steps of Mrs. Jenkins were far too deliberate for those of her excited husband.

"Indeed, you must move quicker, or we will be too late," he said, at every half square.

Great was the speed at which they swept along the street.

"Just four minutes left," said Mr. Jenkins, as they passed the exchange.

At length they reached the foot of Walnut street.

"Has the boat gone yet?" breathlessly inquired Jenkins of a coloured porter.

"Oh no," was replied, with a broad smile on Ethiop's face.

At this moment the eyes of Mr. Jenkins rested upon the upper works of the steamboat, which were in motion.

"She's off!" he ejaculated. "Quick! quick!" And he sprang several paces in advance of his wife, running down the avenue to the dock from which the boat had moved.

"Stop! Stop a moment!" he cried to the captain, who was on the upper deck. "Stop! Hold up! Just a moment!"

But the boat was loosened from her fastenings, and quietly moved down the stream. On her way she kept, as steadily as if no Mr. Jenkins stood calling out and gesticulating on the shore.

"Too bad! too bad! I'll have that fellow fined for disappointing me."

"It is too bad," said Mrs. Jenkins, panting from over exertion, "to be disappointed after all this!"

"The boat's coming back again," said a man who stood near.

"Coming back again!"

"Oh yes. She's merely heading round. It isn't time for her to start by an hour."

"But it's nine o'clock," said Mr. Jenkins, drawing out his watch.

"Oh no, sir; only eight."

"Eight!"

Mr. Jenkins stood with a bewildered air for a moment. Then light broke in upon his mind.

"Only eight!" he repeated. "Right! Sure enough! Well, that is a good one!"

"Only eight!" said Mrs. Jenkins. "That's strange! Does your watch say nine?"

"Yes. But now I remember, it is just an hour too fast."

“Why, Mr. Jenkins! How comes this?”

But Mr. Jenkins, who was caught in his own trap, did not venture to explain that he had, on the night before, set his watch an hour ahead, in order to cheat his wife into being ready in time for the boat! Yet, this was really so. Mrs. Jenkins, however, who was a pretty shrewd woman, guessed at the real truth as they sat, a few minutes afterward, in the cabin of the John Stevens, the only passengers for New York who had yet made their appearance, and she charged the fact upon him so directly that equivocation was of no avail. He has not heard the last of the affair yet.

For all this and other little experiences on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, no particular change has taken place on either side. Mr. Jenkins remains the same nervously-punctual man, and Mrs. Jenkins the same even-tempered, immovably-unpunctual woman. And so it is likely to be with them to the end. So little do men and women profit by the experiences of life when they react upon constitutional weaknesses, defects, and peculiarities of character, confirmed by long habit.



SHORT OF FUEL.

It was the first week in March—a raw, blustering day. The month had come in like a lion, giving the pleasing hope that it would go out like a lamb. I had finished my breakfast, and, having donned my overcoat, was drawing on my gloves, when my wife called to me from the dining-room, where she still sat at the table, in an earnest voice—

“Oh, I declare, I forgot to tell you that the coal was all gone. We must have more to-day.”

"Coal gone!" I exclaimed. "Impossible!"

"Yes. Biddy says there isn't enough to last until night."

"She must be mistaken," said I in a positive voice. "I laid in twenty tons in October."

"'Deed, an' there isn't the full of a coal-scuttle in the cellar," spoke out Biddy, who was in the dining-room. "I put the last in the furnace this morning."

"The furnace coal gone also?"

"Yis, indeed," replied Biddy, who, the huzzy! it was evident from her tone of voice, enjoyed my astonishment and discomfiture; "I've been using the range coal in the furnace these two weeks."

"Well, that beats all," said I, drawing off my gloves and approaching the dining-room door; "twenty tons of coal in five months! four tons a month! What have you done with it, Biddy? You never could have burned it all, if you had tried."

"I didn't ate it nor stale it!" replied Biddy, in a huff.

"But what has been done with it? I can't make that out. Four tons of coal a month, and only three fires. There must be some mistake. It can't possibly be all gone."

"Yees can go and see for yerself," said Biddy, in her independent way.

I shook my head and looked as grave as an alderman with a case before him. A dozen times through the winter I had found occasion to remonstrate with Biddy touching her manner of using coal. Both the range and furnace had been newly put up in the fall, and careful directions left for their proper use.

"You see, Biddy," said I to her, after the range was set and a fire made in it by one of the workmen, "you must never let the coal come above this fire-brick. If you do, it will neither burn so freely nor give such a good heat."

"Oh yis, sir; I understands all about it. I'm used to ranges," replied Biddy, unhesitatingly.

"Moreover," I continued, as though I had not heard her, "if you build the fire up to the top plate, you will crack that and the front piece with the intense heat."

"And do yees think I would destroy your things in that way?" said the girl, half indignantly.

"No, not wilfully, Biddy," I soothingly answered, "but ignorantly."

"Troth, and I'm not such an ignoramus as yees take me for. As if I'd never seed a range in all my born days! D'ye think there are no ranges in the ould counthry?"

"No doubt they're as plenty there as blackberries, Biddy," said I, beginning to be a little out of patience; "but that doesn't signify here nor there. I want you to regulate this one according to instructions—to follow your orders, if you break your owner."

"Troth and I can soon break it for yees, if that's what ye want."

"I haven't the least doubt of that, Biddy," I retorted; "for you're good at that work. But I'm particular in wanting this range preserved from all such catastrophies. I wish it taken good care of; so, all you have to do is to follow my directions in using it; and, if any damage is done, I will be responsible."

"If yees wants to be cook," said Biddy, tartly, "I'll act as scullion."

Finding that I was getting into a humour that threatened to lead me into words and acts not over dignified for the head of a family, I retired from the kitchen without another word. I had invaded my wife's province, and the sharp-witted Irish girl only let me see the instant failure of respect that took place in her mind.

On the morning after this interview, I took occasion to look into the kitchen on some pretence. It was as I had expected. The fire-chamber of the range was so full of coal that portions of the ignited fuel projected in the shape of a cone through the hole in the top plate, which was red with heat. I was about entering a strongly uttered protest against such a proceeding, when a remembrance of the girl's intractable temper, as displayed on the day before, warned me to desist.

"Biddy will destroy that range in a month," said I to my wife, as I went back to the room where she was sitting.

"In what way?" was asked.

"She keeps the fire-chamber full of coals to the top

plate, when I expressly told her that it must not be made above the fire-brick. By doing so, she not only checks the draft, but injures the range, and destroys a third more fuel."

"I told her of that yesterday. But she says the oven won't bake unless the chamber is full of coal."

"It's not true. A free fire will give more heat than a smothered one, as anybody of common sense may know. I wish you would insist upon her managing it right."

"I'll do all in my power; but I can't be always in the kitchen," replied my wife, a little coldly.

I said no more; for I felt that, though master in my own house, there was a limit to my authority. But I could not always tamely submit to the destruction and disorder that ranged in the lower departments of the household. Occasionally, I would suggest to Biddy that she was not managing the range as I had directed; while at other times I would jog her memory more roughly. All, however, availed not. The coal was still piled to the top plate, that, in a few weeks, was cracked in two pieces from the intense heat to which it was constantly subjected.

As for the furnace, or heater, of which Biddy also had the care, it was managed about as well as the range. Whenever I had occasion to go into the cellar, I found the coal in the fire-cylinder piled far above the brick lining and almost rolling from the feeder, while the sheet-iron above the fire-brick was red for the space of several inches. Of course this consumed more coal, injured the furnace, vitiated the air, and diminished the amount of heat usually obtained from a given amount of fuel.

Two or three times I took Biddy into the cellar and explained all this to her. But I might as well have talked to the wind. She generally resented the interference on my part as a trespass upon her particular province, and a charge of ignorance; neither of which she could or would tolerate for a moment.

Thus it had been during the winter. I therefore knew Biddy's character pretty well, and quickly came to the conclusion that from her no satisfaction, touching the departed twenty tons of coal, was to be obtained. As to

her invitation to dive down into the cellar and see for myself, I felt in no humour to accept of it.

"Don't neglect," said my wife, as I still stood in the dining-room door, "to send us some coal immediately. Biddy says there isn't enough to last until dinner-time."

"Indade and there a'n't," spoke up Biddy, in a kind of triumphant voice; "I scraped up the last this very mornin'. There's not the full of a coal-scuttle in the whole cellar."

"You're sure of that," said I.

"'Dade, and I am jist. Sure, yees can go and see for yerself."

As talking would not put a ton of coal in the cellar, I broke short the interview, and, turning away, left the house.

"Twenty tons of coal in five months," said I to myself, musing, as I walked along. "It's incredible! How she could have burnt up that quantity, even with the end of waste in her mind, passes my comprehension. These Irish girls do beat the Old Harry himself in destruction. Half starved, and half frozen over their turf-fires at home, they come over here, and finding things in plenty around them, go to work with the purpose, it seems, of ascertaining how much they can waste and destroy; and, goodness knows! they are successful experimenters, as every house-keeper feels to his sorrow."

But grumbling was of no avail. More coal must be purchased. So, on my way down town, I called at a coal-office and ordered three more tons to be sent home.

"Be particular in sending it this morning," said I. "We are entirely out of fuel."

The dealer promised that it should be done, and I went on my way. At two o'clock I returned home to dinner. It was one of those raw, cold, wet, shivering days peculiar to March; and by the time I had reached my house, I was about as uncomfortable as I could wish to be. The melted snow on the pavement had penetrated my boots, completely saturating my stockings. I was conscious, from my sensations, that I was taking cold, and felt anxious to get into a warm room, and change my stockings, drawers, and pantaloons for others that were dry.

As I opened my door, I was not affected, as usual, with the warmth of a genial atmosphere. I walked into the parlours, and putting my hand against the register, discovered that not a particle of heat was entering the room. I perceived that the dining-room door was closed, so I returned to the passage. Ascending to the first landing, from which this door opened, I entered the room, and found my wife, with a shawl drawn around her shoulders, hovering with the children around the radiator-stove, in which was faintly visible, through the transparent mica in the door, the remains of a departing fire.

"Hasn't that coal been sent home?" I asked, in surprise at the omission.

"No coal has come to-day," replied my wife, shivering; "and we are almost perished. The fire has gone out in the furnace and range, and is going out here. Not a mouthful of dinner has been cooked."

"Dear! dear! dear! That's too bad! too bad! I ordered coal the first thing as I went down; and told the dealer particularly to send it home this morning, as we were entirely out."

"He hasn't done it then. What shall we do? I've taken cold already, and the children will get their deaths."

"Surely, enough coal might have been scraped up to keep the fire alive," said I.

"I sent Biddy down twice, and told her to rake and scrape up every piece she could find; but she could only get the scuttle a third full."

"I'll be bound I can find coal there," said I, positively, and away I turned and plunged down into the cellar. It was so dark that, for a few moments, I could see nothing. But I groped my way to a window, and removed a blind made for the purpose of excluding cold in winter. Then I went back to the coal-bins. In one, I found a large pile of dust, several feet in thickness. On probing this with a stick, I discovered that it contained an abundance of coal, in large and small lumps, which it only needed a little trouble to extricate. There was not less than half a ton concealed in this pile of dust and refuse. Another bin was examined, and about a quarter of a ton discovered there. As much more was concealed in the third bin.

Then, scattered about in all directions, under the wood, covered with chips, and lurking in corners, where it had been carelessly left, was full half a ton more of good coal; making, in all, about a ton and a half; and yet the house was as cold as winter, and no dinner had been cooked for want of fuel.

"Well, this does beat all!" said I to myself, as I glanced around in wonder.

"Do you find any there?" called my wife to me, in an incredulous voice, from the top of the stairs.

"Any! Yes; a couple of tons or so," was my reply.

"Indade, thin," cried Biddy, who was at the side of my wife, "and there isn't the full of a hod there that I could see."

"None so blind as them that won't see," I retorted, angrily. "Bring me down some matches and a newspaper, and I'll soon have a fire in the furnace."

I was now pretty well up, so far as temper was concerned, and when that is the case, I generally make all stand around me, as they say. In a few minutes Biddy came down with the matches, her countenance somewhat fallen in its aspect. I was at work clearing out the ashes and cinders from the furnace. That done, I took the newspaper from her hand, and thrust it down into the cylinder. On this I poured about a peck of charcoal, and, closing the door, touched a match to the paper below. In a moment or two all was in a blaze, and the igniting charcoal crackling as it absorbed the heat. Next I took a shovel, and in a few hurried applications of it to certain half-hidden receptacles of coal that I had discovered, scraped together enough to last for a couple of days.

"Do you see that?" said I, speaking with no great show of amiability.

"Sure, and it's very strange!" meekly replied Biddy.

"Indeed it is; passing strange!" I retorted. "With nearly two tons of coal in the cellar, and not a fire in the house. There's half a ton in that bin, mixed up with coal-dust. See there!" and I dashed my shovel into the centre of the bin, and raking open the heap of dust, showed a solid bed of large-sized coal at the bottom; adding, as I did so: "And now please to take a scuttleful up into the

dining-room, with some charcoal, and set that fire going in the quickest possible time."

Biddy did not linger, you may be sure, in obeying this direction. She had seen me worked up before, and was pretty well aware of the fact, that it would not take much more provocation to make me turn her out of the house, bag and baggage.

By this time, the charcoal I had thrown into the furnace was thoroughly ignited. In order to get up the heat that was needed, as quickly as possible, I turned in about half a bushel more of charcoal on top of this, and then filled it up with the hard coal. As I closed the door of the feeder, the draught roared encouragingly, and gave promise of a speedy change in the chilling aspect of affairs above. On ascending and placing my hand over the register, the inward pressure of warm air was already perceived; and long before the dining-room fire had begun to burn freely, my shivering wife and children were gathered in the parlour, and beginning to rejoice over the presence of a more agreeable atmosphere.

Of course, we had no regular dinner. It was too late in the day for the preparation of that meal. But, by the time the dining-room was warm enough for occupation, the kettle had been boiled, and a cup of tea, with some bread and butter, solaced us for the loss of a more substantial repast.

Through some mistake my order for coal was not attended to, and consequently we had no new supply. I waited patiently and curiously for the result. Steadily, as of old, there was a rush of hot air into the parlours, and when I glanced into the kitchen, I saw the range piled to the top plate as before; while there was no lack of heat in the dining-room. I did not renew the order for coal, for I wanted to see how long this state of things would last.

One morning, about three weeks from the time when Biddy could not "find the full of a scuttle" of coal in the cellar, that young lady, who had been particularly active and obliging since the occurrence described, whispered something in the ear of my wife as we sat at the breakfast-table. On her leaving the room, my wife said—

"Biddy wishes me to tell you that she has scraped up all the coal in the cellar it is possible to find, and that there is not more than enough to last through the day and make up the fires in the morning."

"Oh, very well. I will see that there is a new supply." And I laughed outright as I spoke.

I did not go into the cellar to make any further examinations, for I was well convinced that we were now "short of fuel," and no mistake; but as it was near to the first of April, and the day was mild as spring, I did not suffer very severely in view of the extra expense for coal required to enable us to pass through the season. The order for a fresh supply, that I gave as I passed to my business, was more promptly filled than the one previously given.



THE FIRST CIGAR.

THROUGH many temptations, Harry Lawson had kept himself pure from the vice of smoking until he arrived at the age of manhood. To him it was a most disgusting

and filthy practice; and there were certain of his acquaintances whose persons were so offensive, from the fact that they ever bore about them a sickening odour of tobacco smoke, that he disliked to come near them. How delicate ladies could endure the presence of men whose clothes were ever reeking with fumes from the nauseous weed, was to him a subject of especial wonder. Young men are very apt to fall into the habit, on first entering life, of speaking lightly of the other sex; they generally learn better ere many years pass over their heads. Harry fell into this habit about the time he attained his majority; but his light remarks were never meant for more than a playful retaliation upon his sister Helen, whose wit was rather sharp when men came within reach of a good thrust.

“If any animal but man,” he used sometimes to say, “with an odour half as offensive as that which a smoker bears about him in his clothes and hair, were to come into a lady’s presence, she would faint on the instant. But ‘the man’s the man for a’ that!’”

Helen was usually highly indignant at such insinuations, and would declare that, for her part, she could much better endure the presence of a whole menagerie than one tobacco-smoker.

“Ugh! To have a man breathe his rank breath into your face until you grow faint under the infliction! To have the atmosphere of the room in which you are sitting so tainted by the filthy clothes of a smoker—young, accomplished, well-dressed, and good-looking though he be—as to be obliged, as I have been, to air it for hours before the offensive smell could be obliterated! To have your handkerchief filled with the sickly odour, and your lips coated with a disgusting, bitter film!”—

“Lips, Helen! Lips!” exclaimed the brother, when this remark was made. “Why, is it possible that you let young men, and smokers at that, kiss you!”

“Now, Harry, that is too bad! Kiss me!” and a shiver ran through the young girl’s frame. “I might endure to be kissed by a dog or a monkey, but by a tobacco-chewer or smoker—never! Ugh! The very thought makes me shudder.”

"Then how could your lips be so strangely contaminated?"

"Easily enough, as you very well know; for I have heard you, dozens of times, complain of the very same thing, and seen you over and over again, wash your lips with cologne, after having endured the presence of a smoker, in order to free them from the bitter, sickening deposit they had received from the air he had filled with a nauseous vapour."

"It is horrible; there's no denying that," was the usual admission of Harry, in closing a light sparring contest of this nature. "How a 'human' who makes any pretensions to decency, can render himself so disgusting, passes my comprehension."

Harry Lawson was a young attorney but recently admitted to the bar. He occupied, as an office, the front parlour of the house in which his family resided, and there, patiently or impatiently, according as his temper of mind happened to be, awaited the appearance of some members of that class of individuals who know their rights and are willing to contend for them. Daily he sat and read for hours, or wandered into the court-room to note the cases on trial and mark the peculiar modes of attack and defence as carried on by legal belligerents. Idle time on his hands led him to seek company and modes of overcoming the dullness of waiting for something to do. Riding out, tavern-lounging, meeting with young attorneys in their offices, and such other ways of killing time as happened to turn up, were all resorted to by the incipient lawyer. Of course—

"Have a cigar, Harry?" was asked of him daily; for, among his associates, nine out of ten used the weed.

"Don't smoke! Is it possible?" in nearly all cases met his refusal of the cigar, even by those whose offer of a regalia he had declined some forty times before. And then would follow looks or nods that made him feel that he lacked a manly (?) accomplishment. Often he was the odd one in a party of three or four, all of whom, but himself, were sending up their gracefully wreathing columns of smoke, which fairly darkened the room in which they sat, and almost suffocated him. So far, when this was

the case, from partaking of or adding to the general enjoyment, he rather took from the pleasure of his companions and felt uncomfortable himself.

One day Harry was offered a cigar by a friend, in whose office he was sitting.

"No, I thank you," came as usual from his lips. "I never use them."

"No? Why, man, you don't know what you lose. There is nothing that I enjoy like a good cigar."

"Smoking seems to me an idle, useless habit," said Lawson, in reply to this.

"That only shows what you know about it. There is nothing equal, as a digester, to a good cigar. I don't think I could live without a cigar after dinner. And then, when you sit down alone, or with a friend in the evening, after the excitement and care of the day are over, it tranquillizes your feelings and gives wings to your thoughts. You don't know what you lose, Harry. Take my advice and learn to smoke. Here," and he tossed a cigar into the hat of Lawson, "is one of the mildest and purest flavoured cigars I ever had. Try it."

Harry shook his head, and lifting the cigar, reached it to his companion; but the latter pushed back the hand, saying—

"No—no. I want you to try that. If not now, take it home with you. It's as mild and sweet-flavoured as a rose."

When Harry got home, the cigar was still in his hat; and, as he removed the latter from his head, it fell upon the floor. He picked it up and looked at it. Next he inhaled its fragrance.

"It smells pleasant enough," said he. There was a glowing grate before him, and lamp-lighters on the mantel. To set fire to the little roll of tobacco was the easiest thing in the world. Something whispered him to make the experiment, and, in a moment of weakness, he yielded to the temptation. Next the cigar touched his lips; and then he drew his mouth full of offensive smoke. After puffing this out, he tried it again; and repeated the operation for half a dozen times in quick succession. Then there was a brief pause for reflection and observation of

the sensations produced. The latter were not remarkably pleasant. With a sort of blind desperation he put the cigar again to his mouth, and drew away upon it for two or three times more. As he removed it from his lips, he experienced rather a disagreeable feeling about the epiglottis; water, at the same time, beginning to pour rather freely from the glands into his mouth. Not liking this sensation, he arose and commenced walking about the floor; but it increased instead of diminishing. In a little while he sat down upon a sofa that was in the room, feeling decidedly sick. Just at this moment, Helen entered the office, and on seeing her brother looking very pale, exclaimed—

“Why, Harry, what ails you?”

The young man felt in no mood to answer questions. But an answer was not needed. The smoky atmosphere, and the tell-tale cigar still lying between his fingers, revealed the whole truth.

“Really! Upon my word!” fell from the young girl’s lips. “Smoking! Why, Harry! You’re sick, are you! I’m glad of it! Serves you right! Now, ain’t you ashamed of yourself!”

But Harry was, by this time, too sick to feel shame or any other emotion kindred thereto. And Helen, seeing that he grew paler, began to be a little alarmed.

“Do you feel very sick, Harry?” she asked, in a changed voice.

“Sick as death!” murmured the young man, as the burning token of his folly dropped from his fingers, and he threw himself back at full length upon the sofa with a groan. His face was pale as the ashes his falling cigar had strewn about the floor.

Frightened at this, Helen ran from the room, and announced to the other members of the family, in an agitated voice, that Harry was extremely ill. Mr. Lawson, the father of the young man, started up in alarm and ran down to the office, followed more slowly by the mother, whose limbs trembled so that she could scarcely walk.

In a few moments the experimental smoker was surrounded by some half dozen persons, old and young, including even the servants of the family; yet was he

still so deathly sick and faint, that he did not open his eyes, nor answer the questions put to him, except in a confused, scarcely audible murmur. But he could hear all that was said; and some of the remarks did not in any way improve his feelings.

"What's this?" he heard his father ask, in a quick, surprised voice. "Oh!" and the tone was changed. "A cigar!—Upon my word! Here's the secret! He's been smoking. Well, he deserves to be sick, that's all I have to say; the foolish fellow!"

"Hadn't we better send for the doctor?" asked Harry's mother.

"No. Let him get over it," replied the father. "There's no danger of his dying."

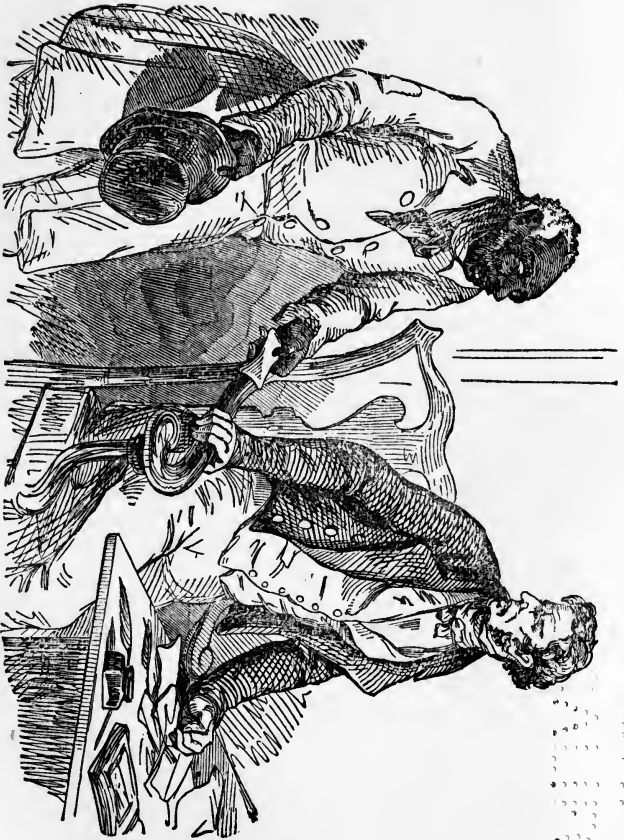
"But he's very sick."

"The sicker the better. Served perfectly right."

While this pleasant little chit-chat, all of which reached the ears of Harry, was going on, Helen commenced bathing his face and forehead with cold water, and then applied salts to his nostrils. This had the effect to revive him, and to throw off the violent sickness he felt. But when he attempted to sit up his head reeled, and he sank back again upon the sofa, afflicted with a most dreadful nausea.

Finally, he was assisted to his chamber, where he hid himself in bed, and there remained until the next morning, when he reappeared, feeling much like a man who had been caught with a stolen sheep on his back.

That was Harry Lawson's first cigar, and—his last one.



JANUARY BILLS.

THE year 18— proved a very good year for Mr. Archibald Lane. His business steadily increased from the first of January, and his profits were as fair as they had ever been. Heretofore, his expenses had kept so closely side by side with his income, as to leave his mind oppressed with care, and in some doubt as to future success; but during 18—, all had been so brisk in matters of trade, and so easy in matters of money, that his mind was uniformly cheerful, and sometimes elated. He felt that, at last, he was entering the way to prosperity; a way he had so long been seeking earnestly to find.

As the year drew toward its close, Mr. Lane experienced a feeling of self-satisfaction unusual at such time. A doubt as to which would over-balance the other, his expenses or his profits, had usually made the last week of the year one of great sobriety to Mr. Lane. In 18— it was different. As the year waned, he had none of the old feelings, for he was well satisfied that he would have several hundred dollars on the profit side of the account, above and beyond all expenses, something that had not occurred in former times.

"If I have made both ends meet, I will be satisfied," was his usual mental declaration, when he proceeded to make up his account for the year. It was different now.

"If I don't have five or six hundred dollars over, I shall be much mistaken." This was the pleasant remark of Mr. Lane to himself, as he began the work of ascertaining the result of his year's business. All came out pretty much as he had expected. There was a balance

in his favour of about six hundred dollars, after a liberal margin had been allowed for certain bad and doubtful accounts.

"Things begin to look a little brighter," said Mr. Lane, as he sat alone with his wife on New Year's eve. The younger children were in bed, and the two oldest daughters, Kate and Emily, were out, spending the evening with a friend. This was said after taking a cigar from his mouth, and letting the smoke curl lazily about his head, which was reclining on the back of a cushioned rocking-chair.

"I'm glad to hear you say so," replied Mrs. Lane. And she spoke from her heart. New Year's eve had not always been a cheerful time.

"I've been looking over my affairs to-day," continued the husband, "and find myself better off than I was at this time last year, by at least six hundred dollars."

"That is encouraging."

"I feel it so. I trust things are to be easier in future, and that we will get a little beforehand in the world. It is time; for I will soon be in years, and less able to give active attention to business."

"I'm pleased on more than one account," said Mrs. Lane, "to hear that you have done so well this year. I've been a good deal worried to-day about a bill that I had no idea would be half as large as it is. It was sent in this morning."

"Whose bill is that?" asked Mr. Lane, with an apparent change of feeling.

"Mr. Mercer's bill for dry goods."

"I didn't know there was a bill there."

"Oh yes. Don't you remember that you told me to get whatever the family wanted from him?"

"I didn't mean to run up a bill, though."

"It was so understood by me. But that makes little difference. If the money had been paid down, the cash would not be on hand now."

"How much is the bill?"

"I'm 'most afraid to say."

"How much?"

"One hundred and thirty dollars."

"Why, Anna! Bless my heart! How in the world could you run up a bill like that?"

"I've bought very little for myself," replied the rebuked wife, in a subdued and choking voice. "Nearly all has been used for you and the children."

"A hundred and thirty dollars! Oh dear! dear! dear!" ejaculated Mr. Lane, throwing his cigar into the grate, and beginning to rock himself violently. "So much of my six hundred dollars' profit scattered to the winds! I wonder how many more bills you will have coming in!"

This was downright cruel; and so Mrs. Lane felt it. She did not, however, punish him for the ungenerous remark with tears, for she was not a woman disposed on all occasions to give way to this weakness. Her reply was:—

"None that the wants of the family have not required to be made."

"But I wished you to pay cash, Anna. You know that, last January, when we were almost smothered with bills from all quarters, we made a resolution to pay cash for every thing during the coming year; and I thought this had been done."

"I know very well that such a thing was talked about," replied Mrs. Lane; "and, I believe, acted upon for a time. And I also know that you yourself told me to open an account at Mercer's, in the spring, when I asked you for money to purchase summer clothing for the family."

"I didn't mean to have it go beyond that," said Mr. Lane, modifying his tone. "But what other bills are there?"

"There is a bill at Cheeseman's for groceries."

"That can't be much, for I have bought almost every thing in quantities."

"No, I don't suppose it will amount to any thing of consequence."

"Any other bills?"

"No; none, except the bread bill."

"I thought you paid cash for bread?"

"We never did that, Mr. Lane. The baker serves us daily, marking on his tally-stick the number of loaves; and once in three or six months sends in the bill, when it is paid."

"How long has his bill been running?"

"Six months, I believe."

"And will be forty or fifty dollars."

"Not half of it," replied Mrs. Lane.

"Well, what else is there?"

"Nothing more, I believe."

"I hope not. Here are about two hundred dollars cut off at a blow from the supposed profits of the year. Confound these bills! I wish there was no such thing as credit."

Mr. Lane was, as a matter of course, unhappy from that moment. Had these bills not existed, and the surplus of the year shown the pleasant aggregate of four hundred dollars, he would have been quite as happy as when he figured it up at six hundred. But, in imagination, he had been better off by two hundred dollars than the truth now discovered him to be, and the loss was felt as real. The remainder of the evening passed gloomily enough. When Mr. Lane retired to bed, he could not sleep for thinking of the dry goods, grocery, and bread bills. While he thus lay awake, memory assisted him to the knowledge of two or three other little matters of the same kind. There was an unsettled tailor's bill that might take twenty-five or thirty dollars to balance; and the boot-maker had something against him. Ten bushels of potatoes and three barrels of apples that he had ordered sent home in October, were yet to be paid for. At least fifty dollars more of his year's profits vanished.

At last, Mr. Lane fell asleep, and dreamed all night of bills that came almost in a shower around him. On New Year morning, he sat silent and moody at the breakfast-table, eating but little, and looking no one in the face. All were oppressed by his state of mind, though none but his wife knew its nature and the cause from which it was produced.

It was early when Mr. Lane went to his place of business on the morning of the first of January; not so early, however, but that one or two persons had preceded him, and left behind them visible tokens of the fact. On his desk were a couple of sealed notes. He opened them with a vague presentiment of something disagreeable, and

he was not disappointed. The first contained a narrow slip of paper, with a printed head, and certain written characters and figures below, which plainly enough expressed the fact that he was indebted to a certain dealer in groceries in the sum of seventy-six dollars.

"Oh dear!" was the mental exclamation of pain that followed the perusal of this bill. That a little piece of paper, three or four inches wide and six inches long, should have such power over the feelings of a man!

The next billet was opened with a more nervous state of mind. As he broke the seal and displaced the envelope, another narrow piece of paper, folded over from the ends in three sections, dropped upon the desk. It was the bread bill for six months, and called for forty-four dollars and ten cents.

"Is it possible? Too bad! too bad! too bad! I had no idea of this."

Thus the unhappy man expressed his feelings. While yet holding this bill in his hand, a lad entered the store; and, coming back to the desk where he sat, politely handed him an ominous piece of paper, and retired. He opened it, and read:—

"Mr. Archibald Lane—Bought of," &c.

The particulars were, an air-tight stove, at twelve dollars; a cooking-stove, at thirty; and various other matters of Russia pipe, fire-boards, etc., in all, amounting to fifty-five dollars.—Though the genial heat from the air-tight stove had comforted Mr. Lane every evening since it came home, and he had enjoyed the improved cooking of the new addition to the kitchen department, he had entirely forgotten that the bill for these increased advantages had never been settled.

"I declare!" he exclaimed, half aloud, and striking the desk as he spoke. "How came I to forget that bill! I meant to have paid it when the articles came home, and told Jenkins to send it in."

Soon after this, Mr. Lane's young man came in from the post-office. There were three letters, each with the city post-mark, and each with a bill enclosed. One, the tailor's bill, called for forty-eight dollars; another was from a hatter, and demanded five; and the third came

from a jobbing carpenter, who had been called in at sundry times to mend and make, and asked for the sum of twenty-three dollars, ninety-two cents.

Mr. Lane read them over, and then placed them under a paper-weight on his desk, uttering, at the same time, a long-drawn sigh.

The morning paper was yet unread. It lay on the desk beside Mr. Lane; and, from habit more than from any desire to know its contents, he opened it and commenced reading. An occurrence of some interest had taken place in a neighbouring city; and he was in the midst of a narrative of the event, and much interested in it, when he started and turned quickly at the sound of a voice near him. A man had entered, and was standing at his elbow.

"Good morning, Mr. Lane," said the man.

"Good morning, Williams," returned Mr. Lane. "Can I do any thing for you to-day!" he added, in a tone of affected cheerfulness.

"Not much," said the visitor, removing his hat as he spoke, and taking therefrom a small package of papers, which he commenced turning over.

"You hav'nt a bill against me?" Mr. Lane spoke confidently.

"What do you call that?" replied the man, as he drew a slip of paper from the package in his hand, and presented it.

"One barrel of flour; five hams; a bushel of corn-meal, and a sack of salt. Bless me! Didn't I pay for these at the time?"

The man smiled, and shook his head.

"Why, it's nine months since I made the purchase! And I'm certain I told you to send in the bill. I never like small matters of this kind to stand."

"It's been overlooked. But the money will be just as good now," was the pleasant answer.

With as good a grace as it was possible for him to assume, Mr. Lane turned to his desk, and drawing forth his pocket-book, counted out thirteen dollars; saying, as he did so,

"The next time I make a bill at your store, I wish you to send it in before the first of January."

"I won't promise," was good-humouredly replied, as the man bowed and withdrew. The pleasure was all on his side, and he could afford to be in a good humour.

"I hope that's the last," said Mr. Lane as he wound the string of his great pocket-book around and around its distended sides, and then laid it carefully back in his desk. But he was in error. Ere the day passed, his bootmaker sent in his bill, amounting to fifteen dollars; and from a ladies' shoemaker came a like token, footed up with the sum of twenty dollars more. An upholsterer had been called upon to make a chamber-carpet, and do sundry little matters about the house during the year; and he called for eight dollars and thirty-four cents. Then the jobbing cabinet-maker had his account to settle with Mr. Lane, for sundry applications of his art to broken-backed chairs, rickety tables, loose veneering, etc. etc., for all of which he wanted sixteen dollars. Thus it went on, hour after hour, until toward evening. The glazier called for two dollars and a half; the tinner presented a bill for five dollars; and the gas-fitter for eight.

By this time, human patience, at least so far as Mr. Lane was concerned, had become wellnigh exhausted. He felt like making a very severe application of his foot to any man or boy who might again invade his premises with a bill. He was sitting at his desk, in this not very amiable mood, with the bills he had received since morning spread out before him, and a slip of paper in his hand, upon which the whole of the sums they called for, amounting to four hundred and sixty-nine dollars and eighty-six cents, had been added up, when he heard the door open and shut. Turning, with a nervous start, he saw the familiar face of an old negro who had polished his boots for the last half dozen years. He knew his errand, and felt that this was like adding insult to injury. Peter came shuffling back toward the desk at which Lane remained seated with contracted brows, revealing, at each step, more and more, of his polished ivory.

"Little bill, massa Lane," said the negro, producing, as he spoke, a dingy piece of paper.

This was too much. It was an ordeal beyond what overtried patience could bear.

"Clear out, you black rascal!" exclaimed the sufferer, in a passionate voice. "If you say 'bill' to me, I'll cut your ears off!"

Such an unexpected reception from "Massa Lane," who had been looked upon by Peter as one of the most amiable men in the world, completely astounded the poor negro; and he beat a hasty retreat, glancing back every now and then to see if an inkstand or paper-weight were not advancing in the direction of his head with something like lightning speed.

To sudden storms there always follows a deep calm. By the time Peter had vanished through the door, retiring at a velocity which could not have been greatly increased had a pack of wolves been at his heels, Mr. Lane's mind was trembling back from its state of uncontrollable excitement. Laying his face down upon the desk, he sighed heavily. Mortification took the place of irritation, and anger against others was succeeded by anger against himself.

"Ah me!" was breathed forth heavily, at last; and raising himself up, he gathered together the bills that were spread out before him, and thrusting them into the desk, turned the key with a firm hand, making the lock click as the bolt sprang to its place.

When Mr. Lane went home that evening, his mind was calm. He had passed through a day of sad trial and disappointment; but he knew the worst, and was prepared for it. When the milk bill, milliner's and mantuamaker's bills, and sundry other little bills were laid before him, he exhibited no emotion. They were to his feelings like a gentle breeze after a violent tempest. But on one thing he was resolved; and that was, to pay cash in future for every thing.

"There must be no January bills next year," said he to his family, after he had looked at the sum to pay long enough to be able to speak on the subject without visible emotion. "Let cash be paid for every thing in the time to come. If the money isn't in hand when the want presents itself, let the want wait!"

This was a good resolution. But did Mr. Lane and his family abide by it? Next January will tell.



DISCOVERING A LEAK.

"PLEASE, mim, the butter is all out," said Nancy, thrusting her face into the door of the room where Mrs. Peabody sat sewing.

"Impossible!" was the lady's reply. "Impossible, Nancy."

"Indade, mim, and there ain't enough for supper."

"What has become of it, Nancy?" asked Mrs. Peabody. "I bought four pounds day before yesterday. It's impossible! It can't be all gone."

"Faith and alive, thin, Mrs. Peabody, and sure it's been used."

"Never!"

The lady was positive in her assertion that the butter had not been fairly disposed of; while Nancy quite as positively maintained the affirmative of the question at issue between them. The result was, Mrs. Peabody had to buy more butter, and continue in darkness as to the ways and means by which four pounds of that necessary article of table comfort had vanished in about two days.

"The white sugar is all out," said Nancy, after breakfast on the next morning.

"The white sugar out! Are you certain, Nancy?"

"Yis, indade. There ain't the full of a tae-cup in the house."

"Didn't Mr. Brown send home ten pounds of sugar on Saturday?"

"I don't think there were ten pounds, mim."

"Well, I do, then. I know there were ten pounds. We always get ten pounds at a time. Are you sure there is none in the box?"

"Sure and sartin, mim."

"It's very strange! Ten pounds of white sugar in five days! What have you done with it, Nancy?"

"Me done with it, mim! And do yees mane to insineate that I wouldn't act honestly?"

"I don't insinuate any thing, Nancy; I only ask what has been done with ten pounds of sugar in five days? It was placed in your keeping, and it's gone. Now I only desire to know how it has been disposed of."

"It's been used in the family, in course," said Nancy.

"No: that is impossible. We only use white sugar for tea and coffee twice a day. Ten pounds, properly taken care of, ought to last two weeks."

"Not if the children are allowed to ate it as they do."

"Who allows them to eat it? I'm sure I don't," said Mrs. Peabody.

"I can't keep them from it," replied Nancy.

"The children never ate all that sugar."

"Well, mim, it's gone," said Nancy.

And that was about all the satisfaction Mrs. Peabody could get.

Not only did sugar and butter vanish thus unaccounta-

bly, but flour and meal, soap and starch, and other things too various to mention.

"I can't stand this," said Mr. Peabody, when his quarter's bill of groceries came in. "One hundred and forty-eight dollars!"

"Not that much, surely," said Mrs. Peabody.

"Yes; one hundred and forty-eight. We never had a bill like this before."

"Isn't there some mistake? Perhaps Brown has sent you the wrong bill and pass-book."

Mr. Peabody referred to the cover of the pass-book, and read—

"'Henry Peabody, in account,' &c. It's our book, you see."

"There's something wrong," persisted Mrs. Peabody.

"That I will readily admit," replied her husband.

"But where is it?"

"May be the book is not added up right," suggested the lady.

Mr. Peabody hurriedly added up page after page of the book.

"All correct, so far as that is concerned."

"Then we are charged with more than we received," said Mrs. Peabody.

"No; I don't believe that. But, to be certain, let me read off the different articles."

This was done; and Mrs. Peabody could not positively say that any charge was wrong, although the entries of tea, sugar, coffee, oil, butter, and lard, were remarkably frequent.

"If it's all come into the house, it hasn't all been eaten," said Mrs. Peabody, in a positive tone of voice.

"Then there must be a leak somewhere," said her husband.

"I'm afraid there is; but how are we to discover it? Nancy's a very extravagant cook, and lays a heavy hand upon every thing. I believe she wastes more than her wages amount to."

"She must have a heavy hand to make things go after this fashion. Are you sure she's honest?"

"I've seen nothing to make me think differently."

"Have you talked to her about the way things go?"

"Oh yes," replied Mrs. Peabody; "over and over again. But it does no good. She declares that every thing which comes to the house is used in the house; and what, then, can I say? I shouldn't like to accuse an innocent person of stealing."

"It's rather a serious matter to accuse any one of that crime. But there's a leak somewhere, and we must find it."

"I wish I knew how to find it," said Mrs. Peabody, despondingly.

"Human ingenuity is equal to any thing. We must find the leak, Anna."

And, in good earnest, Mr. and Mrs. Peabody set to work to find the leak.

Among the frequent visitors of Nancy the cook, was a woman who always carried a basket and wore a cloak. This person Mrs. Peabody often met in the kitchen, and, as she was introduced by Nancy as a poor woman in bad health, with several young children, the lady's feelings were interested in her favour, and she often made her presents of old clothing, and sometimes gave her flour and tea.

Nancy had known this woman in Ireland, and spoke of her as having seen better days. Particularly did she dwell upon the honest character she had borne at home. In this way a very favourable impression was made upon Mrs. Peabody.

"What old woman was that I saw coming out through the basement to-day?" asked Mr. Peabody, on coming home one evening rather earlier than usual.

"Had she on an old brown camblet cloak?"

"Yes."

"Oh, she's a poor woman who comes to see Nancy sometimes."

"And does she always bring her basket along?" inquired Mr. Peabody.

"Why do you ask that?" said the lady.

"I guess you'll find the leak you spoke of there."

"Oh no! oh no! I don't believe the old creature would take any thing which was not given to her."

"That may be. But are you fully advised as to the extent of Nancy's generosity?"

"I don't believe she would take any thing, unless it was cold meat or broken bread."

"Have you ever looked into her basket?"

"No."

"How often does she come?"

"Two or three times a week, I believe."

"O mother," spoke up a bright-looking boy, who was an attentive listener. "She's here every day, and sometimes twice a day."

"Indeed! You're sure of that, Harry?" said Mr. Peabody.

"Oh yes, sir."

"Did you ever see Nancy give her any thing?"

"I saw her put a great chunk of butter in her basket yesterday."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir."

"Any thing else?"

"Some papers. I don't know what was in them, though."

"Did Nancy see you when she did this?" asked Mr. Peabody.

"No, sir. I was looking in at the window."

"Henry's mistaken. I can't believe it," said Mrs. Peabody, in a positive voice.

"It will be an easy matter to settle. The next time she comes, take the liberty to look into her basket."

"No, I wouldn't like to do that."

"Look into her basket, Anna, and, my word for it, you'll find the leak."

Mrs. Peabody shook her head positively at this suggestion.

"If I catch her here, I shall most certainly do it," said Mr. Peabody.

"You'll only hurt the old woman's feelings. It's bad enough to be poor, without having suspicion added thereto."

"Poverty is no crime; but carrying off pounds of but-

ter, sugar, and flour, not to mention a dozen other things, can hardly be called honest."

"I don't believe she does it, Henry."

"It will be more agreeable to know that she does not, than to let the present state of doubt remain. If you don't look into her basket, I will."

Not a long time passed before Mr. Peabody had the opportunity he desired. A little earlier than usual, he came home on the next day; and, just as he reached his own door, up from the basement area came the old woman with the basket. Said basket had a dark piece of woollen cloth, or baize, covered over it, and was, moreover, partly concealed under the woman's cloak. Nancy had come out with her, and stood in the area. Neither of them saw Mr. Peabody at first, but he soon manifested presence; for the moment he saw the woman, he stepped up to her, and drawing the covering from her basket, said—

"What have we here?"

Mr. Peabody spoke in a quick, stern voice.

Nancy, the moment she saw what he had done, turned and went back hurriedly into the house; the woman stood for a moment with a face of dismay, and then dropping the basket, beat a hasty retreat.

"I thought I'd discover the leak," said Mr. Peabody, as he entered his wife's room, bearing in his hand the old woman's basket, which, on examination, was found to contain, besides various other articles, the following, fully recognised as the property of Mr. and Mrs. Peabody:—

One pound of butter; about a pound and a quarter of loaf sugar; three links of sausage, and one loaf of bread. Of the tea and coffee in papers, the freshly cut half-pound squares of soap, the nutmegs, and the dozen other little matters of the kind, it was uncertain whether they had been abstracted from this or some other house in which a leak existed.

Mrs. Peabody was confounded; and so was Nancy, when summoned from the kitchen. Of course, Nancy had no suspicion that the old woman was dishonest, and stoutly maintained that not an article found in her basket had been taken from Mrs. Peabody's kitchen.

Rather doubting this, with so much evidence before her,

Mrs. Peabody had the resolution to dismiss Nancy on the spot; and the act was effectual in stopping the leak. After that, butter and sugar went twice as far as before, and the next quarterly bill for groceries reached only the sum of eighty-one dollars.

In more families than that of Mr. Peabody would a leak be discovered, if old-women visitors to the kitchen, with cloaks and baskets, were occasionally overhauled. There are a goodly number of them about, and the way they make grocery bills run up, is afflicting to a man whose purse is not deep, and well filled with Californias at that.

THE ELOPEMENT.

"YOUNG man, it is useless to urge this matter. In declining your offer of an alliance with my family, I am in earnest."

"I am not content with a simple rejection of my suit, Mr. Carlton. I give reasons for my own conduct, and like to have reasons for all acts affecting myself. Will you say why I am not deemed worthy to claim the hand of one whose heart I already possess? Is not my family as good as yours?"

The young man spoke eagerly, while his brows were knit and his eyes firmly fixed on those of the person he addressed.

"William," said Mr. Carlton, manifesting a good deal of excitement as he spoke, "I do not recognise your right to demand of me reasons for my conduct. I will say, however, that the happiness of my child is in my keeping as a natural right, and I am bound to protect her in every possible way. I regard only her happiness when I decline the offer made for her hand. I know the heart of Jessie well, and know that, if committed to your keeping, it will be a broken heart in less than five years—it may be in less than one."

"I love your daughter, Mr. Carlton," replied the young man to this. "Why should I break the heart of one I love?"

"William Levering, such love as yours falls upon the heart as a blight, not a blessing. I know you well, your principles and your life—both are bad."



A red spot burned on the young man's cheek, and his eyes flashed. But Mr. Carlton looked calmly at him.

"Think," he added; "picture to yourself one of your companions in vice approaching your own sister, and offering the love of his corrupt heart. Would you not step between, abandoned as you are, and risk your very life, rather than permit the sacrifice?"

"Mr. Carlton," said Levering, "I cannot permit you, nor any one else, to insult and outrage me in this way."

"As you like," returned the other, coldly. "You ask reasons for my conduct, but are not willing to hear them."

For a short time, there was silence, the young man standing in an attitude of irresolution. Then muttering something in an under tone, he retired from the presence of Mr. Carlton.

A few hours afterward, a servant tapped softly at the chamber door of Miss Carlton, the young lady referred to in the brief conversation just given.

"What do you want, Philip?" asked Jessie, as she opened the door.

The servant slipped a sealed note into her hand, with an air of secrecy, and then retired.

Quickly re-entering her room, and turning the key, Jessie broke the envelop of the billet she had received, and read what was written within. The communication was from her lover.

"I have seen your father," said he, "as you so earnestly desired, and the result of the interview is just what I expected. He was not content with an angry denial of my suit, but threw me off with smarting insult. He says I cannot make you happy. Heaven knows how ardently I desire to fill your cup with joy, even until it overrun the brim. If the passionate love of a sincere heart can make you happy, Jessie, then your whole life will be blessed. I cannot imagine the ground of his dislike toward me. I have never injured him nor his. This opposition on his part makes me wretched. Are we, then, to remain ever separate? or will you leave all, and throw yourself into my arms? I shall await your answer to this in the wildest impatience. When you have made up your mind, place your answer in the hands of Philip.

He will keep our secret inviolate; for he is under obligations to me of the strongest character."

"My heart is wholly yours," wrote Jessie, in reply.

"Shall heart and person longer be separated?" answered Levering. "To-morrow week, I hear, your father will leave home, to be gone several days. This I learn from Philip. What better opportunity to pass from his protection to mine?"

Two days elapsed, and then the maiden wrote—"Let it be, as you desire."

Weak and foolish maiden! In that decision how much was involved! Not the happiness of a day or year, but, it might be, of a whole lifetime.

What Mr. Carlton had said to Levering of his principles and his life, was true. Both were bad, and very bad. He did not truly love Jessie, for of that he was incapable. No man who lacks virtue can love a woman truly. It is a moral impossibility.

Levering had first turned his thoughts to marriage because it was necessary, as he said to himself, to form such an alliance. He belonged to a wealthy family, and, by marrying into a family of equal wealth and standing, he would take proper care of the future. Of course, he must have a beautiful and accomplished wife. In looking around him, no one struck the young man's fancy so strongly as Jessie Carlton: and, after weighing all in favour and against an alliance with her family, decided to storm the citadel of her heart. Handsome, intelligent, and with a good address, he was not long in making the impression he desired. Jessie Carlton's young heart was quickly won.

Philip, a servant in the family of Mr. Carlton, whom Levering had secured to his interest, was informed of the intended elopement, and employed to give such aid as his position would afford. Of course, the utmost secrecy was enjoined upon him; and his faithfulness was sought to be secured by threats as well as promises. But Philip found it hard to bear up alone under a secret of such great importance; he wanted some one to share with him the heavy burden. So, confiding in the discretion of another servant in the house, a female, he divulged to her, after

first obtaining her promise not to betray what he was about to communicate, the fact of Jessie's intended flight.

On the night previous to the day on which Mr. Carlton was to leave home, he sat up late, engaged in writing. It was past eleven o'clock, when there was a light tap at his door, which was opened immediately, and a female servant glided in noiselessly, closing softly the door after her.

"Well, Hannah?" said he in a voice of inquiry, as she approached him, in a somewhat agitated manner.

Hannah sank into a chair, so much disturbed that it was some moments before she could speak.

"Mr. Carlton," she at length said, "oh! I have something dreadful to tell you."

"For heaven's sake, Hannah, speak out quickly, then! What has happened?" exclaimed Mr. Carlton, agitated in turn.

"Nothing has happened yet; but, if you go away to-morrow, it will happen. Oh, sir, do not go away."

"Hannah, what is the meaning of this? Speak out plainly at once."

"Miss Jessie——"

"Jessie! What of her?"

"She is going off with Mr. Levering."

"When? Where is she?" The father was on his feet, and moving toward the door. "Speak, girl!"

"Oh, sir, don't be frightened," said Hannah; "it isn't to-night. Miss Jessie is in her room. I have only come to tell you about it in time."

"Ah! thank you, my faithful Hannah."

Mr. Carlton spoke in a calmer voice; and, returning to the secretary where he had been writing, sat down again.

"Now," he added, "tell me all you know about this matter."

"All I know," replied Hannah, "I got to-day from Philip. He told me that he has been carrying letters from Mr. Levering to Jessie and back again, for some time, and that it is all arranged for her to go off with him, just at daylight, the morning after you leave home."

"Can it be possible? Mad girl!" exclaimed Mr.

Carlton, passionately. "And you are sure of all this, Hannah?"

"Philip told me, and I'm afraid it is all true."

"Very well, Hannah. I thank you from my heart for this act of duty. You have saved Jessie, it may be, from a lifetime of misery. Mr. Levering is a bad man, and if she marries him, he will make her wretched. Foolish, foolish girl! Could she not believe her father?"

After some further conference, the girl left the room; and Mr. Carlton, closing his secretary, walked the floor for the space of an hour ere retiring. On the next day, greatly to the surprise of Hannah, he left home at the time previously appointed.

No sleep weighed down the eyelids of Jessie Carlton, during the night that succeeded. Through the long hours that intervened from the time the family retired until the hand of Aurora gently raised the curtain of darkness from the east, she either walked the floor of her chamber or lay wakeful upon the bed. At early dawn, she was to pass from beneath her father's roof and from under his protection, committing unto another her destiny. Well might her heart tremble and grow faint as she tried to look into the dark future; well might she shrink back, half repentant, and hesitate about the step she had resolved to take. The silent midnight gives to the wakeful solemn thoughts. Such thoughts came to Jessie; and, as the winds sighed through the trees or moaned beneath the eaves, it seemed as if a spirit were addressing her in tones of warning.

At last, a feeble line of light was seen upon the horizon; and it gradually widened until the dawn appeared. Hurriedly throwing a shawl around her, Jessie stood for some minutes near the window, as if awaiting an expectant signal. Presently, a hand was laid upon the lock. Silently crossing the room, she opened the door. Philip stood there with his finger on his lip.

"Is all right?" asked Jessie, in a low, agitated whisper.

"All is right," returned the man. "Be quick; he is waiting for you."

Gliding through the door, Jessie went noiselessly down stairs. As she passed into the open air, Levering received

her, handing, as he did so, a purse of money to the treacherous servant as his promised reward.

A few minutes prior to this, a scene even more exciting took place a short distance from the mansion of Mr. Carlton, where a carriage stood in waiting for the fugitive. The driver had left his box, and was standing near his horses, when, suddenly, a man was by his side, pistol in hand, uttering, in a low, peremptory voice, "Silence, and you are safe!"

The driver started back a few paces in alarm; while the stranger who had presented his weapon, kept it directed toward him.

"Now leave these grounds as quickly as you can go," said the intruder.

The driver hesitated, when the sharp click of the pistol-lock was heard.

"Go, instantly!" repeated the man. "Your horses and carriage are safe. You will find them at the Stag and Hound in an hour from this. Now go, if you set the value of a hair upon your life."

The driver, by this time thoroughly alarmed, fled. As soon as he had left the ground, the stranger mounted the box and grasped the reins. Hardly had he taken his place, ere Levering and Jessie appeared, and hurriedly entered the carriage.

"Where did you say I must drive?" inquired the man, leaning over from the box.

"To Mr. Liston's. And see that no grass grows beneath your horses' feet."

The man spoke sharply to the spirited animals, and away they dashed at full speed. Liston was a minister, who had been engaged to perform the marriage service for Levering and Jessie. He lived in the town which lay a short distance from the beautiful country residence of Mr. Carlton. In a few minutes, the horses were reined up at the dwelling of the minister, when Levering sprang from the carriage, and lifting Jessie, as she attempted to descend, actually bore her in his arms across the pavement and into the house. Just as the fugitives disappeared, another vehicle drove up at a rapid pace. The self-constituted driver of Levering's carriage left his own

horses, and hurrying to the door of the second carriage, spoke rapidly a few words to some one within ; and then turning away entered the minister's house, and throwing off his rough hat and coat in the hall, presented the figure of a well-dressed gentleman. For a few moments he stood as if awaiting some one, while his ear was bent toward the door of a room that opened from the passage, to hear what was going on within. Then he placed his hand on this door, and gently pushing it open, entered. The young couple were already on the floor ; and the minister, in his robes, stood before them, ready to begin the ceremony. So softly had the stranger entered, that no one perceived his presence but the minister, who did not permit the intrusion to interfere with what he was doing. He began, and progressed until he came to that part of the ceremony in which it is demanded of those present, to show cause why the parties about to be joined in holy wedlock cannot lawfully enter that state, when the door of the room was thrown suddenly open, and a woman rushed in, exclaiming, "I forbid this marriage !"

"Who are you, and by what right do you speak ?" inquired the minister, in an agitated voice.

Levering and Jessie started at this unexpected interruption ; and, turning, looked in astonishment both at the woman and the man.

"Miss Carlton," said the woman, coming up to Jessie and grasping her arm, "you have no right to this man ; he belongs to me by a prior claim, that I will not see cancelled. There is your natural protector"—and she drew her, with a sudden jerk, across the room toward the man who had entered just before her—"your father. And, in heaven's name, let not a man like this tempt you thus madly from his side again !"

Jessie scarcely heard the closing words of the sentence. Overcome by so dreadful a termination of her elopement, she sank into the arms of her father—for it was he who had driven her to the minister's.

Before the vile companion of his evil hours, Levering stood, for a few moments, covered with shame and confusion.

"Now go, young man," said Mr. Carlton, sternly, as

he supported the form of his child; "go with this vile, unhappy creature, whom you have reduced from virtue to a level with yourself. Go, consort with her as your equal; but dream not again of an alliance with the pure being I have saved from your unhallowed grasp. She can never be yours. If, before, you could deceive her into the belief that you were an angel of light, the power of deception is now gone, for you stand before her in all your native corruption and deformity. Go, sir!"

Confounded by a denouement so painful and humiliating, Levering, as soon as he could collect his bewildered senses, sprung from the room. As he gained the open air, the driver who had been so suddenly deprived of his carriage, came up. Levering hurriedly entered the vehicle, exclaiming—"Drive me home!"

The man needed not a second invitation to mount his box. Quick as thought, he had the reins in his hands, and the horses were soon springing before him at a gallop.

The reader doubtless understands all this without further explanation; and Levering had few inquiries to make ere he comprehended the whole affair to more than his entire satisfaction. As for Jessie, she, too, understood enough to make her heart sink in her bosom and tremble, whenever she thought of the narrow escape she had made from an alliance that could only have produced wretchedness, if it would not have borne her down to the grave, in a few short years, with a broken heart.

THE DROP GAME.

"COME, Laban Lee," said the post-master of a certain village in New Jersey, situated within ten miles of Philadelphia—"You must take a paper this year. How can you live, man, without the news?"

"The news!" returned Lee. "Humph! I have more news now than is agreeable. In fact, I don't believe in your newsmongers, no how. Every man mind his own business—that is my motto."

"Yes, but friend Lee, it is of interest to know what is going on in the world."

"No special interest to me. What do I care about other people's concerns? It won't make my cows give more milk, nor my land grow more bushels to the acre."

"I am not so sure of that."

"Ain't you?"

"No."

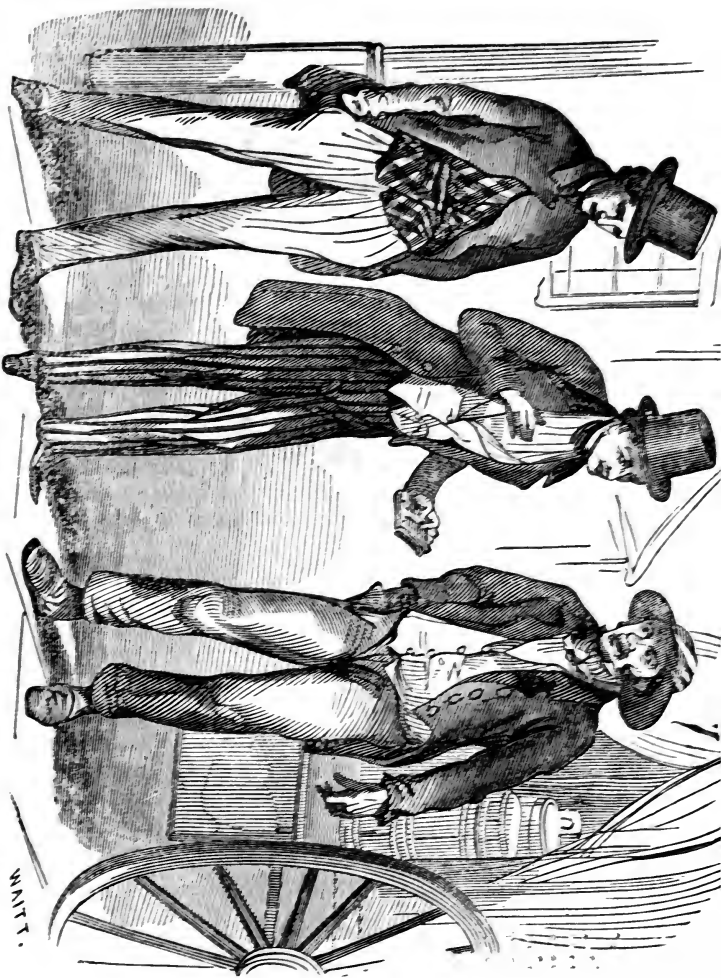
"Well, I am then."

"There are farmers whose cows give more milk than yours, and whose land yields a better increase. From these you might learn something to your advantage."

"But what has that to do with newspapers?"

"A great deal. Intelligent farmers inform the public of their agricultural experiments; and give the new methods by which they obtain large yields of produce."

"Book-farming!" exclaimed Laban Lee, in a tone of contempt. "Never believed in it; and never expect to. The good old-fashioned way is good enough for me. Industry and economy—that is my motto, and I teach it



The Drop Game.



daily to my children. Hand-work is worth all the newspapers in the world."

"I am not so sure of that," returned the post-master. "Hand-work is badly off without head-work, and will soon find itself in the rear."

"I'm not in the least anxious," said Lee, with a self-satisfied air, as he turned off and went on his way toward the city, his tubs well filled with butter, and his wagon loaded with a goodly stock of poultry and fruit. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,"—he kept on talking to himself. "When there is a dollar in my pocket, I know what I've got. But if I spend it for a newspaper, what is there to show for it? I never knew any good to come of taking the papers. They only put nonsense into the young people's heads, and make them think themselves wiser than their parents. Dad! and they shan't come into my house."

Laban Lee, if the truth must be told, had a sordid love of money. The dollar was always held so close to the axis of vision, that little beyond the round bright coin was ever discernible. By hard work, industry and economy, he had gradually gained upon the world, until he was the owner of a snug piece of ground covering about fifty acres, well stocked, and as well tilled as his "good old-fashioned" way of farming would permit.

The over-careful in saving, when love of money subdues almost every other sentiment, are not generally over honest in getting. The every-one-for-himself principle of action generally leads to a disregard of other's interests, a trespass upon other's rights, and a departure from truth in dealing. Into these defects Laban Lee naturally fell, as many a citizen, who had bought tough chickens, bad butter, and spoiled turkeys, from the "fair and honest countryman," could testify. Lee knew how much was gained in these transactions; but never had any idea of how much he lost. Far oftener than any of his customers guessed, his butter, or at least a carefully arranged portion contained in his tubs, lacked several ounces of the true weight; and more than once had he come near losing a goodly number thereof, at the hands of the Clerk of the Market. Such a man was Laban Lee.

As the countryman wended his way toward the city, his thoughts were busy in summing up the probable amount he would receive for the contents of his market-wagon; yet this occupied state of mind did not keep his eyes from resting with intelligent discrimination upon the road he travelled. Money, and articles of value had been found by others, and why might he not be so fortunate? Such things were frequently lost by the careless. The idea of restitution never occurred to him; this was kept obscured by the pleasurable anticipation of gain, as the finder of lost property. Once, and only once, had Laban Lee been fortunate. On a certain occasion as he walked along the road, he espied, a short distance in advance, a bright object partially concealed in the sand. Eagerly he sprung forward, snatched it from the ground, and was rewarded by obtaining half a dollar! Small as the sum was, to gain it thus, awoke in his mind the most pleasing sensations. From that time, whether in town or country, few square rods of earth or pavement over which he passed escaped his watchful eyes.

On the present occasion, notwithstanding Lee examined the road by which he travelled to the city with his usual care, no treasure was found. Better fortune, however, attended him on the day following. He had sold out his butter, poultry, and fruit, and over thirty dollars received in exchange therefor, were in his pocket. Prices had ranged pretty high, and the farmer felt satisfied with his sales. Just as he was preparing to leave, the sudden exclamation of a man by his side startled him, and turning quickly, he saw a gentlemanly looking stranger, with a well filled pocket-book in his hand.

"Somebody's dropped this!" said the stranger, addressing Lee. "And it's filled with money."

The farmer's eyes were instantly distended. He felt his knees tremble.

"Is it your's, friend?" inquired the stranger, blandly.

Lee could with difficulty refrain from saying that it was. But he forced out the words—

"No; I believe not."

"What's to pay?" half carelessly inquired a third party, coming up at this moment.

"Somebody's lost a pocket-book," was replied.

"Indeed! Much money in it?"

"It's full. See there!"

And the possessor of the book showed the folds and edges of a large bundle of bank bills.

"Gracious me! What are you going to do with it?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. It's not mine. Whoever lost it ought to have it. But, as I am a stranger in the city, and shall leave in an hour, it will be impossible for me to restore it. No doubt a large reward will be offered for its recovery, in the morning papers. What's to be done? I'm really in a quandary."

"You ought to get the reward," said the second comer. "For you are the finder."

"True," replied the man. "But I can't possibly remain in the city until to-morrow. To-night must see me in New York."

"If you choose to take it," said the person who came up last, "I will give you fifty dollars for your chance in the reward."

"Fifty dollars," was the musing reply. "I don't know what to say about that. The reward will doubtless be two or three hundred. There can't be less than twenty thousand dollars in the pocket-book."

"I wouldn't like to risk more," was the half-indifferent response to this.

The possessor of the pocket-book seemed irresolute for some moments.

"Well," he at length said, "take it. But I think you are driving on me a very hard bargain."

The other thrust his hand into his pocket, and after feeling about there for some moments, said—

"That's unfortunate! I've left my pocket-book at the store. But come with me, and I'll give you fifty dollars."

"Where is your store?"

"On the wharf."

"Oh dear! No, I'm not going away down there." Then turning to Laban Lee, the stranger said, in the most insinuating manner,

"Why can't *you* take it, friend?"

"Havn't got fifty dollars," replied Lee, his eyes fairly gloating on the pocket-book.

"How much have you?"

"Only thirty."

The man shrugged his shoulders, and shook his head.

"You'd better come down to my store, No. —, South Wharves. I'll give you fifty dollars. Or, if you will take our friend's thirty dollars, I will make it fifty for him the moment he shows himself at my place of business."

"I suppose I will have to do so," said the holder of the pocket-book, in a changed, sober, and rather disappointed voice. "But it is giving up a large advantage for a mere trifle."

Eagerly Laban Lee drew forth his thirty dollars, handed it to the man, and grasped the treasure.

"Come down to No. —, South Wharves," sounded in his ears. A moment after, and he stood alone, yet so bewildered that all his ideas were in a whirl of confusion. Soon a calmer state followed. He crept into his cart, and there, safe from prying curiosity, opened the pocket-book in order to feast his eyes upon the sum of twenty thousand dollars, and to debate the question of restoration.

Alas! From what a height of imagination down to the very bottom of the pit of reality did Laban Lee soon fall. Wrapped around by three or four one-dollar counterfeit bills, was a mass of soiled, crumpled, and blotted strips of bank-note paper; and this was all the treasure contained in the pocket-book!

No wonder that, in his bitter disappointment, the farmer groaned aloud. It was some minutes before even a gleam of light broke in upon the darkness that enveloped him. Then he thought of the man who had agreed to give fifty dollars for the pocket-book. He would go to him instantly, and concealing the discovery he had made, get from him the promised sum, and thus shift the loss upon another.

Of course he did not find the individual he sought at No. —, South Wharves. He was the victim, and this man an accomplice.

Two days afterward, the post-master of Lee's village said to him—

"Aha! So the drop-game boys have been trying their hand on you."

"Drop game? What do you mean?" returned Lee.

"Listen." The post-master drew a paper from his pocket and read. "'Yesterday a farmer from New Jersey, named Lee, was silly enough to pay a couple of sharpers thirty dollars for a pocket-book which they pretended to have found. Of course, this Lee doesn't take the newspapers, or he never could have fallen into a snare that has been so often exposed. We have little pity for men who are wilfully ignorant.'"

Laban Lee turned off suddenly and walked hurriedly away. The next time he went to the city, he ordered a newspaper.

LABAN LEE'S BUTTER SPECULATION.

WHAT HE GAINED AND LOST.

MR. LABAN LEE, after his "Drop Game" experience, was a sadder man than before. He could not get over the loss of his thirty dollars. It troubled him night and day.

"I must get it back, somehow," said the farmer to himself, at length. "I cannot afford to lose so large a sum. To think that I should have been so swindled!"

"I must get it back somehow!" It was full three weeks, from the memorable pocket-book day, when the mind of Laban Lee came to this conclusion. But how was he to get it back? The rogues who had swindled him were not at all likely to cross his path again. There was no hope of restitution from them. But Lee had no thought of this. Then how was he to get back the money he had lost?

By cheating somebody out of it, gentle reader! That is speaking out the plain truth in plain language. He was very indignant at the "drop-game" gentlemen; yet, even while his indignation burned hotly, he meditated wrong to his neighbour.

When men have the desire to do wrong, a suggestion of the means is very sure to come. At the very moment when Laban Lee said—"I must get it back, somehow," he was standing in his spring-house, or dairy, holding in his hand the pound weight used in weighing butter for market. The round piece of iron out of which this was



The Butter Speculation.

made had, originally, weighed less than a pound, but been raised to the legal standard by the insertion of a piece of lead, in a small indentation on the underside. This piece of lead, which weighed some three ounces, was loose, thus offering a temptation for its removal. And with the desire to get back his lost thirty dollars, by fair or foul means, came to the mind of Lee the idea of picking out this piece of lead, and thus reducing the weight of his butter so many ounces.

No sooner thought of than done. The lead was stealthily removed, and not even his better half, who conducted the weighing process, knew aught of the matter.

Just fifty-four pounds, or, rather, "prints" of butter, had Lee in his tub when he started for the city on the next market day; and yet if the whole of this butter had been placed in a scale, it would not have weighed over forty-four or five pounds.

"If I come through safely," said Lee, to himself, as he rode along toward the city, "I'll get back about three dollars of what I lost; and the same thing, ten times repeated, will put me even with the world again. But"—

The other view of the case was too unpleasant for contemplation, and so the roguish farmer would not look at it.

On the next morning Laban Lee took his place in the market, with his tub of fresh butter—and good butter it was, as regards quality. On the top were several prints of full weight; these were for the scales of the market clerk when he should make his appearance, and were very ingeniously passed over by the farmer in making sales.

The price of butter was pretty well up, ranging as high as thirty-five cents. And at this rate Lee had disposed of six or eight prints, when the sudden appearance of the clerk of the market made his heart give a great bound, sending the tell-tale blood instantly to his face.

"All right here, of course," said the clerk pleasantly, as he looked into the face of Lee.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it," returned the farmer, with affected confidence, as he took a lump of butter from his tub. His eyes, however, drooped beneath the clerk's gaze, as he handed it to him.

The butter was placed in the scale, and proved to be good weight.

"Try another!" said Lee.

The clerk reached out his hand and took a second lump, while Lee replaced the first in the tub. This also proved to be up to the standard.

A third came out right also, and, but for something in the manner of Lee, who could not entirely hide his uneasiness, the clerk would have passed on, satisfied that all was right.

The fourth lump was likewise full weight. Up to this point Lee had taken the butter from the tub; but now the clerk of the market thrust in his own hand, and lo! the scale in which he placed the print flew upward.

"Aha, my friend! What's the meaning of this?" he exclaimed, as he transferred the lump of butter to a basket, and took another from the farmer's tub.

The unhappy farmer's whole manner underwent a sudden change, and, spite of an effort at composure, every attitude and expression betrayed his guilt.

The next print of butter proved light also; the next and the next; each in its turn passing from the scale, forfeited, to the clerk's basket.

"At your old tricks again, ha!" muttered the clerk.

"Tricks!" exclaimed Lee, indignantly.

But the clerk kept on transferring print after print from the tub to his basket, until half the contents of the former had changed places. By this time a little crowd began to gather around. Poor Laban Lee! He felt, as the saying is, as if he could sink into the earth.

"What's the matter here?" would ask one and another, as they peered, curiously, at the imperturbable clerk.

"Caught in the very act, ha!" said one.

"Why, friend Lee!" exclaimed another, in whose familiar voice the farmer recognised that of an old customer. "Who would have thought it!"

"Yes; who would have thought it!" chimed in another customer, whose table had for months smiled with the cheering presence of Laban Lee's sweet new butter.

"My good sir," cried a waggish individual, addressing Lee in a grave voice, and pointing, as he spoke, to a pair

of ducks, the property of the farmer,—“as this man takes so large a lot of your butter, you ought to throw in them ducks into the bargain!”

This was too much for poor Lee. With an angry exclamation he flung himself away from the little furious crowd, and, retreating down the market-house for the distance of three or four stalls, kept out of the way until the clerk had finished his work of confiscation, which covered forty prints of butter. On his return, four pound-prints only remained in his tub. Lee did not wait to sell these, but hastily collecting his things together, withdrew in deep humiliation and chagrin.

The loss and gain of this butter speculation was sadly on the wrong side. There was not only loss of integrity, the heaviest loss of all, but loss of money. He had hoped to gain, by a sacrifice of honesty, the paltry sum of three dollars; he had made the fearful sacrifice—fearful in the eternal consequences it involved—and not only lost his honour, but four times the amount of money he had hoped to gain. This was the loss for that day; but the consequence of his sin and folly did not stop with the going down of the sun. When next market day came round, Lee could not muster sufficient courage to face his customers; so he entrusted fifty pounds of butter—this time full weight, and a little over—to a neighbour, not more honest in heart than himself. This neighbour found the temptation of some fifteen dollars in his pocket more than belonged to him, rather too strong, and on one pretence or another omitted to pay over. In fact, he had heard, while in market, the story of Lee's adventure with the clerk of the market, and, as he turned it over in his mind, came, in the end, to the conclusion that he would make it work to his own advantage.

Finding, after repeated efforts to get his money from this unscrupulous neighbour, that he was really in danger of losing the proceeds of fifty more pounds of butter, Lee said to him rather sharply—

“Look here! I'm not going to stand this. Pay me my money at once, or I'll expose you to the whole neighbourhood.”

“You will! will you?” coolly returned the other.

"Yes; I will."

"You'd better not."

There was a threat, as well in the words as in the manner of the neighbour, that communicated a sensation of uneasiness to the feelings of Lee.

"Why had I better not? ha!"

"Try it; and you'll find out," was retorted.

"I will try it."

"Very well; and if, before three hours pass over your head, the whole neighbourhood is not made acquainted with a certain butter speculation of yours, I'm very much mistaken. Ha! What do you say to that? So if you're wise, you'll just keep your tongue between your teeth so far as I'm concerned."

A deep crimson mantled the face of Laban Lee. He tried, for a moment or two, to collect his thoughts for a reply; but finding no fit words in which to answer, he turned suddenly away, and walked soberly on his path homeward.

"Honesty is the best policy." This was the narrow, selfish, self-protecting trueism that forced itself upon the thoughts of the unhappy farmer, as he moved along, with his eyes cast upon the ground; and he resolved from that day to deal in strict honesty with all men, as the safest and best way—best for mere temporal good; the mind of Laban Lee was not then capable of appreciating any higher good. But, if he continues to be honest, even from policy, we may hope that, in time, he will see the true wisdom of being honest without policy. Until then, he cannot be truly honest.





THE SURPRISE PARTY.

MR. and Mrs. Atherton, and their two daughters, Helen and Alice, were sitting one evening in January enjoying a new book, which one of the latter was reading aloud, when a ring was heard. The reader paused, and, for a few moments, they remained listening and expectant. A servant went to the door.

"Are the ladies at home?" was heard asked, in a man's voice.

Then a movement, as of two or three persons entering, was noticed.

"I wonder who they are?" said Alice.

"Some one has gone up stairs," remarked Mrs. Atherton, who had been listening. "You'd better go and see who it is, Helen."

The daughter was about rising to do as her mother had suggested, when one of the parlour doors opened, and a young gentleman, dressed with great care, presented himself.

"Mr. A——! How are you this evening?—I'm very happy to see you!" said Mr. Atherton, advancing to meet the young man and welcoming him cordially.

The others greeted him in return, and he then took a seat among them.

"I'm sure some person went up stairs," said Mrs. Atherton, speaking aside to Helen.

"True. I heard them plainly." And Helen retired from the room. As she came to the foot of the stairway in the passage, she was a little surprised to find a light in the room which opened from the first landing, and to

perceive, through the half-opened door, the figures of two or three persons moving within. She went up quickly and entered. Three young girls, intimate acquaintances, were there, all tastefully dressed, and displaying a profusion of ornament.

"Why, Anna!—Jane!—Cordelia!" fell from the lips of Helen, as she grasped a hand of each in succession and exchanged salutations. Then there came a pause. Helen's countenance assumed a quick, thoughtful air; while her young visitors were full of life, and every nerve quivering in anticipated pleasure.

"Walk down into the parlour," said Helen. "Father, and mother, and sister are there."

As they were leaving the room, Helen's eyes rested upon a lamp that burned upon the table. It was a small, fancy, gilt lamp, and had never before been seen by her. She noted the fact, but her mind was too much excited at the moment to reflect upon so singular a circumstance.

The appearance of the three rather elaborately dressed young ladies, as an addition to the family party below, very naturally created some surprise, and disturbed the mental equilibrium of those in the parlour. But the Atherton's were well-bred people, and not easily thrown off of their guard by any thing *mal-a-propos*. The social circle widened with graceful ease, and the unexpected visitors of the evening were quickly made at home.

In about a quarter of an hour, the bell rang again, when two more elegantly dressed young ladies, with a male attendant, appeared. They were also intimate acquaintances, and joined the company in the parlour in that familiar, "of course" kind of a way, that mystified the Athertons, who, by this time, began to fear that some misunderstanding had taken place, likely to produce unpleasant and mortifying results. But, as before said, they were well-bred people, and manifested no signs of discomfort or surprise.

A third addition of this kind caused Alice and Helen to retreat to their chamber, in order to give some little attention to their toilet; and Mrs. Atherton soon followed their example. While this was going on, the bell continued to ring and company to arrive every few moments;

and, by the time they descended again to the parlours, a party of between twenty and thirty were assembled there, most of them particular acquaintances, and all perfectly at home. Additional lights were now ordered, and things made to correspond as perfectly as possible with the suddenly changed order of affairs, and with little apparent hurry and no apologies.

A family council, composed of Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, and Helen, was now called, in order to fix upon some concerted action in so strange an emergency.

"What does it mean?" said Mrs. Atherton, in a whisper, so soon as they were alone.

"There is some mistake," remarked Mr. Atherton, gravely.

"A very strange kind of a mistake. We've sent out no invitations to a party."

Mr. Atherton shook his head and compressed his lips.

"Somebody has taken a very unwarrantable liberty with us, I fear," he remarked. "No doubt, all of these persons have received regular invitations to attend a party at our house to-night, and are here, as they believe, at our instance."

"Is it possible any one could do a thing like that?" said Mrs. Atherton.

"Yes. There are persons who take a strange pleasure in annoying others with practical jokes; and the greater the annoyance they can produce, the higher is their gratification. To some one of our friends, who seeks enjoyment in this ungenerous mode, we are no doubt indebted for the affair on our hands this evening. I can only say, that I have particular reasons for regretting the mode he has chosen to annoy us. But as our friends are here, innocently, we must not only do our best to entertain them, but avoid the slightest intimation that they were not expected."

In this all agreed. While conversing, the bell was kept constantly ringing, and party after party of guests arriving.

"I wonder how many more are coming?" remarked Mrs. Atherton, as she listened to a mingling of several

voices in the passage, after the street door had been again opened.

"It will be a large party, without doubt," replied Mr. Atherton; "for when an affair of this kind is gotten up, it is rarely a half-way piece of work."

"We will have to procure refreshments," said Helen.

"Certainly. The company are here upon our invitation, as they suppose, and we must give them a suitable entertainment."

"It is too late to provide a regular supper," suggested Mrs. Atherton.

"Yes; that is now out of the question. We shall have to confine ourselves principally to cake, wine, fruit, and confectionery."

"And make a pretty liberal order for that, if the company continues to assemble much longer at the present rate," said Mrs. Atherton.

Her husband did not answer to the remark, but suppressed a sigh that was throwing itself involuntarily from his bosom.

"We must decide this matter soon," suggested Mrs. Atherton.

"Yes. In half an hour or so we will be able to make some estimate of what will be wanted. Then I will send round to Parkinson an order for ice-cream, cake, and confectionery, &c., for a party of a given number; and to our grocer's for wine and fruits."

This and other little matters pertaining to the entertainment being settled, they returned to the parlours and rejoined the company. As Mr. Atherton was entering the rooms, now pretty well filled, he was still more surprised than he had yet been, to hear the movement of a bow across the strings of a violin. This was repeated three or four times, and then a familiar air came from the instrument, and there was a movement in concert on the floor. In other words, a cotillon had been formed; and when Mr. Atherton was able to take a survey of the rooms, he discovered a grinning negro fiddling away in one corner, and the obedient dancers threading their mazy circles in harmony with the strains he was drawing forth.

Here was a new and not so easily explained feature in

the affair. Who had ordered the music? That puzzled him. But, as he dwelt upon it, light came in. It was only one of the harmonious parts in the practical joke. The individual who had amused himself with sending invitations in the name of the family, had, in the name of the family, ordered a fiddler. So that, after a little reflection, was explained.

Self-composed, affable and attentive, the Athertons moved amid their company with an easy familiarity, so well assumed that few could have detected, even with close observation, the restless surprise that lay beneath all.

About nine o'clock, and just as they were about sending an order for refreshments, two coloured men entered and bore a large basket between them through the passage into the dining-room. Here they made themselves perfectly at home. The tables in the room were set out, and covered with cloths which they had brought with them. Upon these were arranged elegant china dishes, plates, saucers, &c., with knives, forks, and spoons.

"Well, I am confounded!" exclaimed Mrs. Atherton to her husband, as the two met in one of the chambers above for further consultation. "I don't know what to make of it."

"Nor do I," returned the husband. "I confess to being entirely puzzled."

"It is plain that a supper has been ordered by some one."

"Yes, that is evident enough."

"Wouldn't it be well to ask some questions of these coloured waiters who have taken possession of the dining-room, without so much as saying 'by your leave?'"

"No—no," replied Mr. Atherton; "we will ask no questions; that would betray our ignorance and surprise too much."

"There is no need of our sending for refreshments."

"None at all. Instead of considering ourselves entertainers, we may as well place ourselves among the entertained, and have no further care for any thing."

And so the Athertons acted from that time. It was in vain that efforts were made, through the most careful observation, to detect the master of ceremonies in this

singular affair. No one appeared more forward than the others; but all acted in such perfect concert, that it was plain to Mr. Atherton, at length, that some general understanding existed among the whole party.

At eleven o'clock, one of the strange waiters came up to Mr. Atherton and announced to him that supper was ready.

"Very well," replied Mr. Atherton, as naturally as if he had ordered the supper himself, and then gave notice to the company to pass into the dining room for refreshments. A splendid entertainment had been provided, consisting of all the delicacies served up on such occasions, both light and substantial, with an abundance of choice wines and rare and delicious fruits.

It can hardly be a matter of wonder, that the continued surprise of the Athertons took away all appetite for the dainties set forth in such tempting profusion. They were active and attentive to all during the gay repast, but partook of little themselves.

After supper, the company went back to the parlours. A few more cotillons were danced, and then they all retired. At half-past twelve o'clock the Athertons were alone. The waiters who brought in the supper had removed every thing, leaving scarcely a trace behind them.

"If this isn't a dream, it's the strangest waking adventure in social life that I have ever heard of," said Mr. Atherton.

"I'm puzzled entirely," added Helen. "I can't understand it at all. I never heard of such a thing. Like father, I'm half inclined to think we are dreaming."

"Who could have gotten up the affair, and carried it through so adroitly?" said Mrs. Atherton. "I tried, all the evening, to detect some one a little more officious than the rest, but was not able to do so."

"It was well managed, to say the least of it," remarked Mr. Atherton; "but being a practical joke, the enjoyment was all on the side of the jokers—I say jokers, for it seems to me, now, that it was a concerted thing; and that all present understood each other perfectly."

"Do you think so?" exclaimed Alice, striking her hands together in sudden surprise.

"So it presents itself to me."

"You've guessed right, without doubt," said Helen, as a light went over her face. "Now I can understand a good deal that puzzled me. Well, as you say, it was handsomely managed."

"But, as I said still further, the enjoyment was all on one side. We had none of it, I believe."

"It was no pleasure to me," remarked Mrs. Atherton, seriously. "My heart was in a flutter all the evening, and it required a constant struggle to keep my real feelings from coming into manifestation."

"That was my own case," added Helen. "Surprise took away all my pleasure. There has been a pressure on my bosom all the evening, and I am still unable to breathe freely."

Alice tried to express what she felt on the occasion, but her lips quivered and tears came into her eyes. Mr. Atherton, seeing this, remarked—

"Ah, well, my children, let us try and forget the whole affair, or think of it with as little feeling as possible. If it has given others pleasure, let us be content with that."

"I have felt a sense of humiliation all the evening," said Alice, who recovered immediately her self-possession. "No one who had a proper respect for us could have committed a social outrage like this—I call it by its real name."

"It was certainly an indelicate invasion of a man's household. An intrusion within the family circle that nothing can justify," replied Mr. Atherton, seriously. "And Alice suggests truly, that, in the minds of the author or authors of the affair, there must have been a want of proper respect for our characters and position. This is self-evident. I have felt it all the evening."

"And so have I, most keenly," remarked Mrs. Atherton. "Suppose," she added, "that we had just received intelligence of the death of a near relative, or were in some serious trouble? How much deeper would our affliction or trouble have been felt!"

"Or suppose," said Mr. Atherton, "I were embarrassed in business, and a creditor happened to go by and discover that I was entertaining a large and gay company,

would it not prejudice him against me, and put me in great danger?"

Mr. Atherton spoke feelingly.

"It was wrong, viewed in any light," remarked Mrs. Atherton. "Wrong—wrong. Pleasure is well enough in its place; but when it becomes an intruder, and boldly invades the family circle, the act is nothing less than an outrage."

Such was the state of mind produced in the family upon which had been played off the practical joke of a compulsory party, for the amusement of a set of thoughtless young men and women, whose knowledge of human nature was too limited to teach them a decent respect for the sacred seclusion of the home circle.

On the evening of the party, a middle-aged man was passing slowly along the street in the neighbourhood of Atherton's residence. The sound of music and gay voices fell upon his ears, and he paused to listen.

"Ah, ha!" he muttered to himself, as he moved on again. "A party! Yes—yes. Well, I thought he had something else to think of besides parties. And I suppose he has. But—extravagant wife and daughters. Yes, that's the secret. Hum—m—m. Well, if this is the game to be played, a check-mate had better come now, than when there are only a few pawns on the board."

And thus he went muttering on his way.

On the next morning, when Mr. Atherton went to his store, he found a note on his desk. It was in these words,—

"DEAR SIR:—I find, on reflection, that I cannot make the arrangement about which we conversed a day or two ago.

Yours, &c.,

D. ADAMS."

Mr. Atherton immediately became agitated. The reason is soon explained. Two or three heavy losses had crippled him in business, so far as present resources were concerned, and he had applied to this Adams for aid in his extremity. Adams had the fullest confidence in Mr. Atherton, and at once determined to "put him through," as he expressed it. He was himself a large creditor, and had already partly agreed to extend his own notes, as

well as to make liberal loans. But he had suddenly, and, to Mr. Atherton, unaccountably changed his mind. The promised arrangement could not be made.

Fully confiding in Adams, Mr. Atherton had sought aid in no other quarter. No wonder that he was agitated when it was known that he had nothing in bank, while notices for the payment of over five thousand dollars in drafts and bills, due that day, were lying on his desk. It took nearly an hour for the almost paralyzed mind of Mr. Atherton to come back to its usual state of vigour and activity. At first, all became dark and hopeless; for he had no borrowing facilities, having in the conduct of his business always preferred keeping it within his own control. But his extremity was great, and it would not do to fold his hands in inactivity and let swift destruction fall upon him. So, after a good deal of earnest thought, he went to work with some spirit, and before one o'clock was in possession of the required amount of money. In obtaining it, however, he had been compelled to make some heavy sacrifices. But this was overcoming only the first difficulty in a way crowded with impediments; and, with each succeeding day, he found himself more and more embarrassed and crippled.

About a week subsequent to the party which we have described, a young man named Bonnel, who had only a short time before commenced business, came into the store of Mr. Adams, and, with much concern in his face, said—

“Have you heard about Mr. Atherton?”

“Nothing very particular. What’s the matter?”

“I’m told that his paper was laid over to-day.”

“Ah! I’m sorry,” replied Mr. Adams, evincing much regret. “But it is what I have expected.”

“It is! I never dreamed of such a thing. I thought him one of our soundest men.”

“So he has been. But he’s met with heavy losses of late.”

“I wish I had known that,” said Bonnel, looking very grave.

“Why. Does he owe you?”

“Yes. I sold him a pretty heavy bill week before last.”

"I'm sorry for that."

"Do you think it will be a bad failure?"

"I cannot tell. I have always had great confidence in him; but that has become slightly impaired. I knew he was in difficulties, and was about helping him through them, when a circumstance occurred that made me decline doing so. I felt that there would be too much risk. The fact is, his family are too gay and extravagant."

"I never heard that charged upon them," said Bonnel; "and I know them intimately."

"It's no good sign," replied Adams, "for a merchant, who is crippled in his business through heavy losses, to indulge in large and costly parties."

"Atherton has not done so."

"Beg your pardon. I happen to know that a large party was given at his house not over a week since. I was about affording him all the assistance he needed; but, when I saw that, I felt bound, in justice to myself, to decline an arrangement that might involve me in loss."

"And was that your only reason for refusing aid?" said Bonnel, in surprise.

"It caused a train of reflection in my mind, that led naturally to the decision formed."

"You were unjust to him, Mr. Adams," said Bonnel, firmly.

"Show me my error," was calmly replied.

"Mr. Atherton did not give that party."

"It was at his house."

"No matter. He had no more to do with getting it up than you had. It was a surprise party."

"And, pray, what is that?"

"Did you never hear of a surprise party?"

"Never."

"Indeed! They're quite the rage this winter. The particular friends of some family arrange to give them, or rather compel them to give a party. They fix upon the night—the family being kept in total ignorance of the fact—and go, with their own music and refreshments, and take them by surprise. The greater the astonishment and confusion of the family, the greater the enjoyment of those who go. I planned the party at Ather-

ton's; and, I can assure you, it was a most delightful affair."

"It may have been fun to you; but, like the frogs in the fable, it was death to them," said Mr. Adams, seriously.

"How so?" asked Bonnel.

"You placed them in a false position, and forced upon them the disadvantage of a wrong judgment. On that very day, I had made up my mind to put Mr. Atherton through. He had fully confided to me his difficulties, and I had resolved to help him over them. But, in passing his house at night, I was surprised to find him giving a large party. For a man in his position to indulge in party-giving, was not the thing, in my estimation. It didn't look well. Something is wrong there, said I to myself. And my final conclusion, upon which I acted, was to risk nothing with him."

"Can this be possible?" exclaimed Bonnel, exhibiting much distress.

"It is true, as I tell you."

"I did not dream of such a consequence. It was but a piece of innocent sport on our part," said Bonnel.

"It was a liberty," replied the merchant severely, "for which there is no excuse on any ground. I can scarcely conceive of a greater social outrage than the one you have indulged. Suppose intelligence had been that day received of the death of a near relative; or some family trouble was oppressing the minds of all; how greatly would your untimely sport have increased the pain they were suffering! Knowing, as I do, the state of Mr. Atherton's mind on that occasion, I can well understand how rudely jarred it must have been. But that is nothing to the disastrous consequences which have followed. Ruin has been the result. An honest man has been stricken down in the midst of his business career."

As he said this, he turned partly away from Bonnel, who, feeling offended, left the store.

The struggle upon which Mr. Atherton entered, proved too much for him. Alone, he could not contend successfully with his difficulties. After a day of anxious effort, he found himself unable to meet the notes and drafts

which fell due, and the hour of three came with his obligations still in bank. Up to that time he had been in a state of deep distress and agitation. But, when three strokes upon the clock sounded the knell of his broken fortunes, and further effort was vain, a calmness fell upon his mind; and he awaited, with a sort of stoicism, the appearance of the notary, into whose hands his dishonoured paper would be given for protest. The notary came and went. That ordeal, a deeply trying one, was passed. His reputation as a merchant was now blasted. The apple of his eye had been touched. But he had borne the pain with a heroism that surprised even himself.

This trial past, visions of future meetings with creditors began to form themselves in his mind, and his sensitive feelings were already beginning to shrink painfully in anticipation, when he saw Mr. Adams enter his store.

"I am told that your paper has laid over to-day," said the latter, as he took the hand of Mr. Atherton.

"You've heard aright. The notary left me but a little while ago."

"For what amount have you been noted?"

"Three thousand dollars."

"How much more will you need to carry you through?"

"Not less than ten thousand dollars."

"You shall have it, Mr. Atherton. I laboured under a false impression regarding you, when I declined the arrangement you wished to make a week ago. Here is the money you need to-day." And he drew forth his pocket-book as he spoke. "Get your paper out of the hands of the notary before he can protest it. To-morrow I will see you and arrange the rest."

On the next day, all was arranged as had been promised; and the merchant, who had been on the very brink of ruin, and actually falling over, was saved.

That was the last affair of the kind in which Bonnel ever engaged; and the last inflicted on the Athertons. It had like to have proved more than a simple Surprise Party to them.





Taking Care of Number One.

TAKING CARE OF NUMBER ONE.

"EVERY one for himself." This was one of Lawrence Tilghman's favourite modes of expression. And it will do him no injustice to say, that he usually acted up to the sentiment in his business transactions and social intercourse; though guardedly, whenever a too manifest exhibition of selfishness was likely to affect him in the estimation of certain parties with whom he wished to stand particularly fair. In all his dealings, this maxim was alone regarded; and he was never satisfied unless, in bargaining, he secured the greater advantage, a thing that pretty generally occurred.

There resided in the same town with Tilghman—a western town—a certain young lady, whose father owned a large amount of property. She was his only child, and would fall heir, at his death, to all his wealth. Of course this young lady had attractions that were felt to be of a most weighty character by certain young men in the town, who made themselves as agreeable to her as possible. Among these was Lawrence Tilghman.

"Larry," said a friend to him one day—they had been talking about the young lady—"it's no use for you to play the agreeable to Helen Walcot."

"And why not, pray?" returned Tilghman.

"They say she's engaged."

"To whom?"

"To a young man in Columbus."

"Who says so?"

"I can't mention my authority: but it's good."

"Engaged, ha! Well, I'll break that engagement, if there's any virtue in trying."

"You will?"

"Certainly. Helen will be worth a plum when the old man her father dies; and I've made up my mind to handle some of his thousands."

"But certainly, Larry, you would not attempt to interfere with a marriage contract?"

"I don't believe any contract exists," replied the young man. "Anyhow, while a lady is single, I regard her as in the market, and to be won by the boldest."

"Still, we should have some respect for the rights of others."

"Every one for himself in this world," replied Tilghman. "That is my motto. If you don't take care of yourself, you'll be shoved to the wall in double quick time. Long ago, I resolved to put some forty or fifty thousand dollars between myself and the world by marriage, and you may be sure that I will not let this opportunity slip for any consideration. Helen must be mine."

Additional evidence of the fact that the young lady was under engagement of marriage soon came to the ears of Tilghman. The effect was to produce a closer attention on his part to Helen, who, greatly to his uneasiness, did not seem to give him much encouragement, although she always treated him with politeness and attention whenever he called to see her. But it was not true, as Tilghman had heard, that Helen was engaged to a young man in Columbus; though it was true that she was in correspondence with a gentleman there named Walker, and that their acquaintance was intimate, and fast approaching a lover-like character.

Still she was not indifferent to the former, and as he showed so strong a preference for her, began gradually to feel an awakening interest. Tilghman was quick to perceive this, and it greatly elated him. In the exultation of his feelings, he said to himself—

"I'll show this Columbus man that I'm worth a dozen of him. The boldest wins the fair. I wouldn't give much for his engagement."

Tilghman was a merchant, and visited the East twice every year for the purpose of buying goods. In August, he crossed the mountains as usual. Some men when they leave home and go among strangers, leave all the little good breeding they may happen to have had behind them. Such a man was Tilghman. The moment he stepped into a steamboat, stage, or railroad car, the every-one-for-himself principle by which he was governed, manifested itself in all its naked deformity, and it was at once concluded by all with whom he came in contact, that, let him be who he would, he was no gentleman.

On going up the river on the occasion referred to, our gentleman went on the free-and-easy principle, as was usual with him when in public conveyances; consulting his own inclinations and tastes alone, and running his elbows into any and everybody's ribs that happened to come in his way. He was generally first at the table when the bell rang; and, as he had a good appetite, managed, while there, to secure a full share of the delicacies provided for the company.

"Every one for himself," was the thought in his mind on these occasions; and his actions fully agreed with his thoughts.

On crossing the mountains in stages (this was before the railroad from Baltimore to Wheeling was completed) as far as Cumberland, his greedy, selfish, and sometimes downright boorish propensities annoyed his fellow-passengers, and particularly a young man of quiet, refined, and gentlemanly deportment, who could not, at times, help showing the disgust he felt. Because he paid his half-dollar for meals at the taverns on the way, Tilghman seemed to feel himself licensed to gormandize at a beastly rate. The moment he sat down to the table, he would seize eagerly upon the most desirable dish near him, and appropriate at least a half, if not two-thirds of what it contained, regardless utterly of his fellow-passengers. Then he would call for the next most desirable dish, if he could not reach it, and help himself after a like liberal fashion. In eating, he seemed more like a hungry dog, in his eagerness, than a man possessing a grain of decency. When the time came to part company with him, his fellow-travellers

rejoiced at being rid of one whose utter selfishness filled them with disgust.

In Philadelphia and New York, where Tilghman felt that he was altogether unknown, he indulged his uncivilized propensities to their full extent. At one of the hotels, just before leaving New York to return to Baltimore, and there take the cars for the West again, he met the young man referred to as a travelling companion, and remarked the fact that he recognised and frequently observed him. Under this observation, as it seemed to have something sinister in it, Tilghman felt, at times, a little uneasy, and at the hotel table rather curbed his greediness when this individual was present.

Finally he left New York in the twelve o'clock boat, intending to pass on to Baltimore in the night train from Philadelphia, and experienced a sense of relief in getting rid of the presence of one who appeared to know him and to have taken a prejudice against him. As the boat swept down the bay, Tilghman amused himself first with a cigar on the forward deck, and then with a promenade on the upper deck. He had already secured his dinner ticket. When the fumes of roast turkey came to his eager sense, he felt "sharp set" enough to have devoured a whole gobbler. This indication of the approaching meal caused him to dive down below, where the servants were busy in preparing the table. Here he walked backward and forward for about half-an-hour in company with a dozen others, who, like himself, meant to take care of number one. Then, as the dishes of meat began to come in, he thought it time to secure a good place. So, after taking careful observation, he assumed a position, with folded arms, opposite a desirable dish, and awaited the completion of arrangements. At length all was ready, and a waiter struck the bell. Instantly, Tilghman drew forth a chair, and had the glory of being first at the table. He had lifted his plate and just cried, as he turned partly around—"Here, waiter! Bring me some of that roast turkey. A side-bone and a piece of the breast"—when a hand was laid on his shoulder, and the clerk of the boat said, in a voice of authority—

"Farther down, sir! Farther down! We want these seats for ladies."

Tilghman hesitated.

"Quick! quick!" urged the clerk.

There was a rustling behind him of ladies' dresses, and our gentleman felt that he must move. In his eagerness to secure another place, he stumbled over a chair and came near falling prostrate. At length he brought up at the lower end of the table.

"Waiter!" he cried, as soon as he had found a new position—"waiter, I want some of that roast turkey!"

The waiter did not hear, or was too busy with some one else to hear.

"Waiter, I say! Here! This way!"

So loudly and earnestly was this uttered, that the observation of every one at that end of the table was attracted toward the young man. But he thought of nothing but securing his provender. At length he received his turkey, when he ordered certain vegetables, and then began eating greedily, while his eyes were every moment glancing along the table to see what else there was to tempt his palate.

"Waiter!" he called, ere the first mouthful was fairly swallowed.

The waiter came.

"Have you any oyster sauce?"

"No, sir."

"Great cooks! Turkey without oyster sauce! Bring me a slice of ham."

"Bottle of ale, waiter," soon after issued from his lips.

The ale was brought, the cork drawn, and the bottle set beside Tilghman, who in his haste, poured his tumbler two-thirds full ere the contact of air had produced effervescence. The consequence was that the liquor flowed suddenly over the glass, and spread its creamy foam for the space of four or five inches around. Several persons sitting near by had taken more interest in our young gentleman, who was looking after number one, than in the dinner before them; and, when this little incident occurred, could not suppress a titter.

Hearing this, Tilghman became suddenly conscious of the ludicrous figure he made, and glanced quickly from

face to face. The first countenance his eyes rested upon was that of the young man who had been his stage companion; near him was a lady who had thrown back her vail, and whom he instantly recognised as Helen Walcot! She it was who stood behind him when the clerk ejected him from his chair, and she had been both an ear and eye-witness of his sayings and doings since he dropped into his present place at the table. So much had his conduct affected her with a sense of the ridiculous, that she could not suppress the smile that curled her lips; a smile that was felt by Tilghman as the death-blow to all hopes of winning her for his bride. With the subsidence of these hopes went his appetite; and with that he went also—that is, from the table, without so much as waiting for the dessert. On the forward deck he ensconced himself until the boat reached South Amboy, and then he took good care not to push his way into the ladies' car, a species of self-denial to which he was not accustomed.

Six months afterward—he did not venture to call again on Miss Walcot—Tilghman read the announcement of the young lady's marriage to a Mr. Walker, and not long afterward met her in company with her husband. He proved to be the travelling companion who had been so disgusted with his boorish conduct when on his last trip to the East.

Our young gentleman has behaved himself rather better since when from home; and we trust that some other young gentlemen who are too much in the habit of "taking care of number one" when they are among strangers, will be warned by his mortification, and cease to expose themselves to the ridicule of well-bred people.



THE STREET SMOKER.

"WHEW! This is terrible!"

"I'm almost suffocated!"

"There! That ungentlemanly fellow has puffed his vile smoke into my very face.—Pah!"

"See with what an air he moves along a step or two in advance of us. He feels his importance!"

"He's no gentleman!"

This was said with womanly emphasis.

"Of course not. A gentleman carefully avoids everything that is distasteful or offensive to others; and, for this reason, he would no more smoke in the street than he would commit any other outrage upon good manners and good breeding."

"And this is Chestnut street! The great city promenade!"

"There! Pah! Isn't it shocking? That overgrown, dandy negro, aping the manners of his white compeers, coolly blew his vile smoke into my face."

"Just look at that newsboy! Isn't he a man in his own estimation! With what a dainty air he removes his cigar from between his lips—how leisurely the smoke curls about his dirty face and uncombed head!"

"This is Chestnut Street no longer. It is the city's great smoking saloon."

"Bell, dear! who is that?"

Our eyes followed the indication given by the lady to her companion.

"Who?"—"That young man in advance of us."

"The fellow who just puffed his smoke in our faces?"—"Yes."

"I'm sure I don't know. I haven't had a good look at his face."

"I've seen him before, or I'm greatly mistaken."

"Where?"—"At Hetty G——'s."

"It can't be R——?"—"I think it is."

"He's a gentleman."—"We shall soon see."

The two young ladies quickened their pace.

"It's R——, as I live!" we heard, in a low exclamation.

"Hetty shall know of this."

"Indeed she shall. I thought I perceived the vile odour of tobacco on his clothes, as he came near me, when we met him at Hetty's the other evening. It is bad enough for a young man to use the nauseous weed in private; but, to smoke in Chestnut street—that proves his quality! Oh, yes, Hetty shall hear of this."

"By the way," remarked the other, with a good deal of sharp sarcasm in her voice, as they fell back a few paces from the smoke—"what a high manly estimation of himself the individual must have, who can appear in the most frequented street in the city, with a burning roll of tobacco between his lips, from which he draws into his mouth a quantity of smoke, and then puffs it out into people's faces who cannot but be annoyed and offended at such rude and ungentlemanly conduct."

"The act tells the story for such individuals," was the reply.

"We need not trace their history downwards."

"You are right there, dear. Right there."

We heard no more; but we had heard enough. If any thing more was wanting to impress us with a deeper sense of the nuisance so feelingly spoken against, we had the argument added in a choking mouthful of the vilest smoke that ever issued from the mouth of a cigar-puffing vagabond.

THE TEMPERATE DRINKER.

"COME, Harry, sign the pledge, and let rum alone!" said a young man to his friend. "Do not play with edged tools, or you may cut yourself."

"I'm not afraid," was the reply; and Harry tossed his head with an air of independent confidence.

"You ought to be," urged his friend. "Look at old Blake, and see what a miserable creature he has become? Even I can recollect when he was industrious and respectable, and had his family around him. Now where are they? Two of his children, the youngest, are in the poor-house,—the rest are scattered, and his wife has gone down in sorrow to her grave."

"I am aware of all that. Why do you allude to it?"

"Blake was once a sober man."

"I don't know when. Even at the time when he had his family around him, and was in prosperous circumstances, he drank like a fish."

"You don't mean to say that he was born a drunkard?"

"No, of course not. But I mean, that he has always, since he drank at all, used liquor immoderately."

"What do you mean by immoderately?"

"Oh, as to that, freely enough to confuse his mind."

"But I have heard my father say, that, when a young man, Mr. Blake was very temperate, rarely drinking any kind of liquor."

"That may be. But when he took to drinking, he went beyond the bounds of moderation."

"There is no doubt of that. But you don't suppose that he took to drinking immoderately at once?"

"I don't know anything about the process by which he became a drunkard. Very certain I am, that if he had not made an improper use of liquor, he would never have been the miserable wretch he is now."

"You never said a truer word than that, Harry. But now the question comes up, what is a proper use of liquor? Will you answer me that question?"

"A proper use of it is to drink it temperately, when you feel the need of a little stimulus."

"Exactly what Blake himself would say were he now present—except that he would not probably use the word temperately."

"And yet that word makes the important difference."

"What do you mean by temperately, Harry?"

"I mean moderately. Or in quantities so small as not to produce intoxication."

"How often ought this moderate portion to be taken? Oh, I recollect now,—You said that it should be taken whenever the need is felt of a little stimulus. Now, suppose this need is felt twice in the day, would that be too often to take a little?"

"No, of course not. I take a glass at least twice a day, and sometimes as often again."

"You do?"

"Certainly I do."

"The time has been, I suppose, when you didn't take more than a single glass a day."

"Yes. But it was, I believe, because I couldn't get any more."

"At least, you drink more frequently now than you did a year ago?"

"Yes, I believe I do."

"How do you account for that?"

"On the principle that I can bear more now than I could then. The habitual use of an arm makes it stronger—so does the habitual drinking of liquors make the nerves able to bear more powerful stimulants."

"Are you not afraid, Harry, to practise upon such a principle? Are you not afraid that the habit will grow upon you, until, before you are aware, it has obtained the mastery?"

"No, indeed! Not I! I know myself too well."

Depend upon it, you are on dangerous ground," the friend urged. "Facts, innumerable, prove, that no one becomes a drunkard suddenly—that no drunkard ever intended to become a slave to the love of strong drink "

"Perhaps so. But I have no fears. I have always been a temperate drinker, am one now, and intend remaining one as long as I live."

"Will you go to a temperance meeting with me to-night, Harry?" his friend asked, after the silence of a few moments.

"What for?"

"A very popular lecturer is going to speak. I think he would interest you."

"I don't see very clearly how I am to be interested in a dry temperance lecture."

"You may not find it quite so dry as you imagine. Indeed, from what I have heard of this man, who is said to be one of your rough-hewn, strong, original thinkers, I am pretty certain that you will not fail to be highly interested. He has, himself, felt in his own person, all the horrors of drunkenness; and can, therefore, and does, speak strongly and feelingly."

"One of your reformed drunkards?"

"Yes. Did you ever hear one of them make an address, or relate an experience?"

"No."

"Then come to-night by all means. It will be a treat for you."

Henry Ellis, that was the young man's name, promised, after a little further persuasion, that he would attend the meeting—though he still thought that it would be an evening poorly spent. Accordingly, at the time appointed, he entered the hall where the meeting was to be held, and took a seat in front of the stand. After the preliminaries of the meeting were over, a short, stout, hard-featured man arose to address the audience.

"Rough-hewn, sure enough!" Ellis muttered to himself—"and no doubt original enough. Well, perhaps I may hear something worth laughing at. Let us see."

"Well, my friends," began the speaker, in an easy, familiar, off-hand style,—“You want me to make a speech for you, and I suppose I must do it. It will be rough, but to the point, and if I hit some of you pretty hard, you musn't get angry. I never could get along by whipping the devil round the stump. It must be face to face, arm's length, or not at all. I've spoken every night for the

past week, in the different villages, round about, upon all kinds of subjects. I've put it to the distillers hard, I tell you. One man swore that he would shoot me. But I'm not afraid. My cause is a good one, and if I maintain it manfully, it will bear me on safely to the end — leaving not even the smell of fire upon my garments. Next I walked into the rum-sellers like a thousand of bricks, and made them flutter like hens in a barn-yard with a hawk over their heads. It touches their pockets, this temperance movement, and stains their respectability—so it does; and they can't bear it. They find that their rum-built palaces, and money wrung from worse than widows and orphans, do not now give them the standing in society that they once had. The people's eyes are opened, and they see plainly; and seeing plainly, they call things by their right names, and estimate by a truer standard.

“Having, therefore, curried off and rubbed down the distiller and the rum-sellers, and charged home upon them the responsibility of ‘drunkard-making;’ I must now turn my attention to a class of the community who have quite as much to do with ‘drunkard-making.’ Who are they? you ask. I will tell you. They are the temperate drinkers. Some of you look surprised — prick up your ears and become all attention. It's a fact, I can tell you, and I'll make it as plain to you as that two and two make four. Answer me this question. Would there be a single drunkard to-day, if there had not been moderate drinkers a few years ago? No, of course not. The moderate drinker is the blossom — the drunkard the fruit. Or, to give you something more striking, I will use the language of a brother lecturer. The difference, says he, between a temperate drinker, and a drunkard, is the same as between a pig and a hog. The pig is a pretty fair beginning of a hog, and the temperate drinker a pretty fair beginning of a drunkard. You can no more have a drunkard without a moderate drinker, than you can have a hog without a pig. This is plain talk, my friends, and some will call it extremely vulgar — especially if it hits them a little hard. No doubt it is very vulgar and unrefined to say pig and hog. The eating of ‘them ere’ animals is quite genteel; but to name them is shocking. Well, perhaps it is. But we can't help it. Homely illus-

trations are generally the most forcible, because their truth is less clothed, and consequently more apparent.

"Now I hope you all understand the position I take. And you all see that a weighty responsibility rests upon the moderate drinker; for without his co-operation, it would be impossible for all the distillers and rum-sellers in the world to make a single drunkard. He may answer me, that if the responsibility does rest upon him, it is a responsibility that affects none but himself. Let me beg your pardon, my friend. I assume that you will become a drunkard, which is a very natural inference, as you are in the only possible road leading to that wretched state. Well, you have passed the point, up to which you were fully able to control yourself, and are now a passive slave in the hands of the most heartless, inhuman tyrant, that ever cursed the earth. You are married. The gentle maiden who won your heart's first and best affections, became, years ago, your wife; and around you are clustered the sweet pledges of early love. Will not these be affected by your fall? Answer me that! Let me relate what I have myself seen. It is no made-up story. Around it are clustered no scenes of imaginary woe. It is truth — truth unadorned, but with a power to reach the heart that no mere fiction can ever claim."

The lecturer here seemed to be affected, and paused for a few moments. When he again commenced speaking, it was in a changed tone, low, distinct, and full of touching pathos. It was nature's eloquence — the eloquence of the heart, that now fell from his tongue.

"In giving the history which I am about to relate, I had intended to speak in the third person," he said; "but the recollection of some things has so touched my feelings, that I cannot go on, unless I speak of them as they were, and of myself as the principal actor.

"I was, my friends, in early years, a temperate drinker as were most of those around me. I took my glass, regularly, every day, as a matter of course, and thought nothing of it. At twenty-three I became attached to a gentle, affectionate girl, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, for whom my love steadily increased, until it seemed as if I would at any time have laid down my life for her. This earnest affection was returned. At twenty-

four I married her. An old man, considered by most in the village as eccentric, because, I believe, he rigidly refused to drink any kind of intoxicating liquor, met me on the next day.

“‘Good morning, Henry,’ he said, extending his hand, while a benevolent smile lit up his venerable face. ‘Most sincerely do I congratulate you on your marriage with Hetty Wilkins. I am sure you will be happy. From a child I have known and loved Hetty, and that love has grown warmer every day. This interest which I feel in both her and you, makes me free to whisper one warning in your ear, Henry—to caution you against the only danger that it seems to me can possibly wreck your happiness. May I speak freely?’

“‘To me, certainly!’ I replied, wondering within myself what he could possibly mean.’

“‘The only danger, then, Henry,’ he said, ‘lies, I believe, in your unwisely indulging in the use of ardent spirits.’

“‘I cannot tell you how surprised I was at this. At first, I felt half angry with my aged friend; but this feeling passed away, as I thought of his eccentricity.

“‘You are certainly jesting with me,’ I said; ‘or else are under some strange mistake about my habits. I do not drink to excess.’

“‘I am perfectly aware of that, Henry,’ was his serious reply. ‘I know that few young men in this neighbourhood indulge less than you do. But the danger lies in the fact of your using liquor at all. It does you no good. Cut it off, then, Henry, and your happiness, and that of your young wife, are beyond the reach of danger.’

“‘I have perfect control over myself,’ I urged.

“‘Of that, I am assured,’ he said. ‘But I have heard many say the same in my time, who now lie in drunkard’s graves, and their children have found a home in the almshouses, or in asylums for destitute orphans. Had they done as I now wish you to do, all this degradation and misery would have been saved.’

“This conversation fully determined me not to abandon the use of liquor. To have done so, would have been admitting to myself and others that there was a danger of my becoming that miserable being, a drunkard. The

very idea was a disgrace, and I rejected it with contempt.

"Alas! alas! The fears of my friend were prophetic. In ten years from that day, with five neglected children, and a heart-broken wife, I turned away from the comfortless tenement that had for a few months sheltered us, houseless and homeless?"

Low, mournful and tremulous was the voice of the speaker, as he uttered these words! And then followed a long, breathless pause, in which each one of his hearers could hear the laboured pulsations of his own heart.

"I can say but little more," he at length resumed. "The recollections of that day—of wretched days for my wife and children, that went before, and that followed after, have touched my feelings more deeply than I had expected. Thank Heaven! those days are past for them and me. There is fire on our hearth, and sunshine in our dwelling. Young man! Temperate drinker! Despise not the warnings of experience. What has happened to me, may happen to you. You cannot now feel more secure in your resolution than I did, then, in mine. I fell: so may you. Let me entreat you, neither to touch, taste, nor handle the accursed thing. For the sake of her, towards whom your earliest and best affections are now going out, guard yourself. So shall the bright promise of your marriage hour be fulfilled!"

The speaker then took his seat, not having spoken over one-third of the time he had allotted himself. But he had said enough. The arrow had been sent with a true aim, and found its right place. But few remarks were made by others; and then, while an invitation hymn was sung with fine effect, the pledge was offered for signatures.

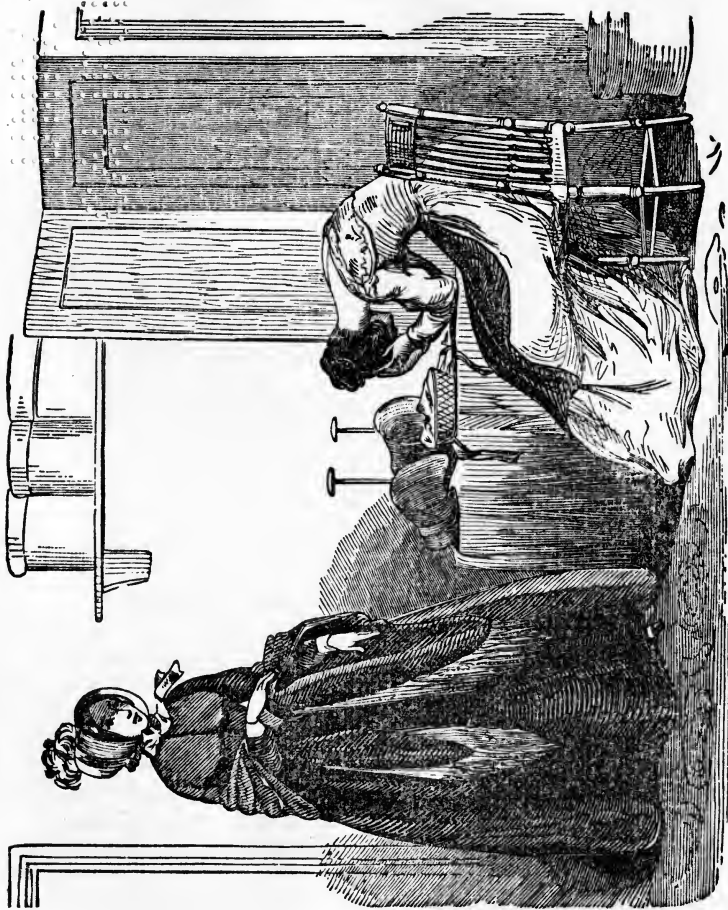
The first who presented himself, was, Henry Ellis. He sprang forward with an eagerness that showed how deeply he had felt his danger, and how eager he was to escape.

Three weeks from that night he was married to one of the sweetest girls in the town. While the lecturer was speaking of his early history—of his marriage—and of the sad results of his temperate drinking—Ellis felt awful as imagination pictured his own darkened hearth, and the

heart-broken maiden whom he so tenderly loved, shivering beside it.

"Horrible!" he murmured to himself, with a shudder, as he shook off the dreary, prophetic state into which he had been thrown. This fixed his resolution never again to suffer anything that could intoxicate to pass his lips — and under this feeling he acted when he signed the pledge so eagerly.

[illegible]



THE SPRING BONNET.

"MY dear Carry," said Martha Grier to her young friend Caroline Mayfield—her face was grave and her tones serious—"I wish you would give up this worldliness, this carnal pleasure-seeking, to which you are so devoted."

"Don't preach to me, Martha," replied Caroline, in a gay tone; "I'm quite as good as you are."

"And a great deal better, I hope," said Martha Grier. "But our own good is as nothing—it will not save us. 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate,' are the words of solemn admonition spoken to every living soul."

"Come out from among whom?" asked Caroline.

"From among worldlings."

"From among the evil—so I understand the injunction."

"Well, and what is the difference?" said Martha Grier.

"Oh, a great deal. The evil are they who purpose and seek to do wrong; while the worldlings, as you call them, are often very good kind of people—in fact, a great deal better than many of your over-pious, self-righteous sort of folks, who coolly consign such as I am to a place I have no fancy for, and to which I shall take good care not to go."

"You speak lightly on a serious subject, Carry."

"Oh no!"

"You jest with religion."

"Beg your pardon, dear; I have never done that in my life."

"Then I don't comprehend you," said Martha.

"I am aware of that. People like you see only within the limit of a very small circle. I should be sorry to give you the keys of heaven and hell."

"Carry!"

"Don't look so shocked, my dear."

"Didn't you say, just now, that you never jested with religion?"

"I did say so, and I repeat it."

"I don't know how I am to interpret your present language."

"Don't you? Understand it then, as only referring to those who, like yourself, limit the heavenly life to a life of simple piety, and account charity as of little worth; to those who separate the world and religion, instead of bringing religion down into the very centre of action, and making it the heart and lungs to common society."

Martha looked surprised at this remark. There was a meaning in it that she but faintly comprehended.

"Be not conformed to the world," said she, oracularly; "but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds."

"What do you mean by conforming to the world?" asked Caroline.

"Following after its fashions, and entering into its pleasures."

And, as Martha said this, she let her eyes wander meaningly over the handsomely-dressed person of her young friend.

"I believe you hold dancing to be sinful," said Caroline, "as well as opera and play-going?"

"I do, most assuredly," replied the young devotee.

"And fashionable dressing?"

"Certainly. In all this I see only conformity to the world, which is strictly forbidden."

"Is it not possible that a conformity of the spirit may be meant?" asked Caroline.

"And is an external conformity possible without an internal one?" said the friend.

"No, certainly not; but in the false maxims and evil principles which govern in the world, we will be more likely to find the origin of real evil acts, than in a mere fondness for dress or in a desire for innocent pleasure."

"Innocent pleasure! Do not the words contradict each other?"

'Each pleasure hath its poison, too,
And every sweet a snare.'

"And so," returned Caroline, "has every good thing; but the poison and the snare lie in its perversion from its proper use. And depend upon it, Martha, you are in quite as much danger of perverting things from their true order as I am."

"How so?"

"True righteousness—I will speak as plainly as you have spoken to me—true righteousness may be verging, in you, closely upon self-righteousness, while over-piety is destroying charity."

Martha Grier seemed half offended by this sort of plain speaking. She had, in a spirit of self-righteousness, assumed to lecture her friend on the subject of worldly folly and carnal-mindedness—not supposing for a moment, that there existed any room for retaliation. Perceiving the effect of her words, Caroline changed the subject by saying—

"I saw some beautiful new style bonnets this morning. Have you selected one for the spring yet?"

"Yes; I ordered one yesterday."

"Who is making it?"

"Miss Wheeler."

"Ah! does she make your bonnets?" said Caroline.

"Yes; she has done the millinery of our family for the last two or three years. Her mother and younger sisters are almost entirely dependent on her, and we throw every thing in her way that we can. Besides, she is reasonable in her charges; and we like to encourage the poor."

"Has she good taste?" asked Caroline.

"Oh, very good."

"Then I will get her to make my bonnet. I saw one to-day that pleased me exactly."

"I wish you would. It is a charity to give her work."

After leaving her young friend, Caroline Mayfield called upon Miss Wheeler and gave an order for a bonnet.

"I want it this week, remember," said Caroline.

"I have a good deal of work on hand to be finished by

Saturday night; but I will try my best to get yours done."

"Oh, it must be done," replied Caroline gayly. "I wish to show it off at church next Sunday."

The young milliner smiled at the remark of her customer, made jestingly, and said that, unless some unforeseen event occurred to prevent it, she would have the bonnet done.

"Very well, I will depend on you," said Caroline, and went away.

Saturday evening came; but no bonnet had yet been sent home for her. "I must see about this," said she; "I can't be disappointed in my new spring bonnet. Have set my heart on showing it off at church to-morrow." So she drew on her things; and, taking her little brother with her for company, started off for the milliner's.

"Can I see Miss Wheeler?" asked she of a child who opened the door of the modest dwelling where the bonnet-maker resided.

"Yes, ma'am," replied the child; "she is in the work-room. Will you walk up?"

Caroline tripped lightly up stairs, and pushed open the door of the work-room. The only inmate was Miss Wheeler, and she sat with her face bent down on a table, and two unfinished bonnets lying near. She did not move when Caroline entered, nor look up, until the young lady placed her hand upon her and spoke. Then she started, and turned a pale, weary face toward her visitor.

"Oh, Miss Mayfield," said she, forcing a feeble smile to her face, "you have come for your bonnet. It isn't quite done yet; but I will finish it before I go to bed, and send it to you early in the morning. Both of my girls have been sick for three days, and I've been up all night for two nights, trying to get through the work promised. Your bonnet and Miss Grier's are the only two that remain unfinished. I'm sorry you had the trouble to come out. But I won't disappoint you."

"How long will it take you to finish these bonnets?" asked Miss Mayfield.

"I shall have to work late; but I'll get them done."

"How late?"

"Till twelve o'clock—or perhaps later."

"No, Miss Wheeler," said the young lady, firmly, yet kindly, "that must not be. You shall neither overwork yourself, nor break the Sabbath by worldly labour on my account. Let my bonnet lie over until next week; and I can safely speak for Martha Grier that she will bear cheerfully her disappointment. Put up your work, and take the rest you need."

"My head has ached dreadfully all day, and now the pain half blinds me," said Miss Wheeler.

"Then put by your work, by all means," urged the kind-hearted young lady. "My old bonnet looks very well; I wore it to church last Sunday, and can wear it again to-morrow."

"I'm afraid Miss Grier would not be pleased."

"She's not unreasonable and cruel. I know Martha better than that. Send her word how it is, and she will cheerfully bear her disappointment."

"You are very kind," said the sick and weary young woman. "I feel as if it would be wrong to tax my strength too far. Much depends on me. If I were to get sick, I don't know how mother would get along."

"Put away every thing, and go to bed at once, Miss Wheeler. If you finish my bonnet and send it home, I won't wear it to-morrow. So that is settled."

Thus urged, Miss Wheeler laid aside her work; and, with her head aching almost to distraction, after sending one of her brothers to inform Miss Grier that she was too sick to finish her bonnet, sought her chamber and rest for her weary limbs. She had just fallen into a gentle sleep, when her brother, who had gone on the errand to Miss Grier, returned, and entered her room.

"Mary! Mary!"—cried he, placing his hand on her, and arousing her from slumber—"Mary!"

Miss Wheeler started up; but, before she had time to ask a question, the boy said—

"Miss Grier says that she must have her bonnet to-night!"

"Did you tell her that I was sick?" inquired the sister, binding her hands across her aching forehead as she spoke.

"Yes; but she said she didn't care—she wanted her

bonnet and must have it, if you worked all night to get it done."

"Oh dear!" sighed the sick, exhausted girl, as she sat up in bed, still clasping her throbbing brows.

"She needn't think to put me off in this way," I heard her say to her mother," added the boy.

"Are you sure that you told her I was sick?" asked the weary girl.

"Oh yes; I told her so twice. But she was angry, and said she didn't care—sick or well, her bonnet must be done."

"It is hard," murmured the poor girl, as she commenced slowly putting on the clothes she had a little while before taken off. "Oh! how my head does ache!" she added, after a few moments, pausing in her work of redressing herself, and leaning her head against the wall near which she stood; "it seems as if it would burst."

The next day was the peaceful Sabbath, the season of rest from labour. The sleep of Caroline Mayfield had been sweet, and in the morning she arose with tranquil feelings. When church time came, she was ready to go with the family to the house where God is worshipped, even though a new bonnet did not grace her head. Great was her surprise, however, soon after taking her seat in church, to see her friend Martha Grier wearing the new spring bonnet which she had thought lay still unfinished in Miss Wheeler's work-room. As the over-pious young lady walked up the aisle, it was plain, from the motion and air of her head, in what particular direction her thoughts were centered.

"What can this mean?" thought Caroline Mayfield, as she looked at the new bonnet of her young friend. "Surely Martha did not compel that sick girl to work half the night, in weariness and pain, that she might exhibit a new bonnet to her fellow-worshippers?—Did not make her break the Sabbath, that she might keep it a little more to her own satisfaction?"

Thoughts like these kept crowding themselves into the mind of Caroline Mayfield, to the exclusion of ideas more fitting for the place and occasion.

After the services were ended, she moved, with the

retiring congregation, slowly from the place of worship. Just as she reached the pavement, she felt a hand upon her arm. Turning, she met the half smiling, half serious face of Martha Grier. The smile was natural; the serious look, the forced expression. The first came from the thought of her beautiful new bonnet; the last was constrained, as fitting the occasion. Meaningly, yet almost involuntarily, her eyes glanced to the head of her friend.

"So you didn't get your new bonnet," said she, in a low voice, as soon as they were a little away from the crowd. "How comes that?"

"Miss Wheeler was too unwell to finish it," replied Caroline, with a seriousness that she felt and did not attempt to conceal.

"Oh, then, you let her put you off with that excuse! But she couldn't get away from her promise to me so easily."

"Don't you regard sickness as an excuse for the non-performance of a contract?" said Caroline, looking earnestly at her young friend, and speaking in a very serious voice.

"Sickness? Oh yes, sickness; but ——" and she hesitated, for Caroline was gazing into her face with a look that disturbed the pleasant elation of her feelings.

"But what?" asked Caroline.

"Miss Wheeler wasn't *sick*."

"Suppose we call there on our way home from church, and see how it is with her."

"Oh no; I don't care about calling there to-day," said Martha.

"Why not?"

"It's Sunday, for one thing."

"The better the day, the better the deed, you know. But, to speak seriously, Martha, I think it your duty to call."

"Why so?" asked Miss Grier.

"In all probability, by requiring the poor, over-wearied, exhausted girl to work until two or three o'clock on Sunday morning to get your new bonnet done, that you might show it off in church to-day, you have made her sick in

real earnest. At least, it is your duty, as a professing Christian, to call and see whether this be so or not."

Miss Mayfield felt pretty strongly on the subject, and she spoke with some severity.

"Carry, why do you talk in this way to *me*?" said Martha Grier, her manner changing.

"I speak only the words of truth and soberness," returned Caroline; "and these you should be willing to hear. One whose piety shines forth so conspicuously as yours, should see that she does not neglect her charity. Come, will you call with me on Miss Wheeler?"

"Yes, as long as you seem so earnest about it. No harm can be done. Most likely you will not find her at home."

Little more passed between the two young ladies. They were soon at the humble abode of the milliner. Mrs. Wheeler, the mother of the girl they had called to inquire about, opened the door for them.

"How is your daughter?" asked Caroline.

"She is very ill to-day," replied Mrs. Wheeler. "Won't you walk in?"

The two young ladies entered.

"Very ill, did you say?" remarked Caroline, as the door closed.

"Yes, very ill, I am sorry to say. She was hurried last week, and her two girls going home sick, she worked nearly all night for three nights in succession to get through with her engagements. She was quite ill last night, but sat up until three o'clock to finish a bonnet. I tried to get her to bed; but she wouldn't give up until it was done. Then, as the last stitch was taken, she fell fainting from her chair."

"And she is very sick now?" said Caroline.

"Yes, very sick. I sent for the doctor. He didn't say much; but I know he thinks her bad. She's quite out of her head."

"Out of her head?"

"Yes. And she rolls about on her pillow, and talks all the time. Oh dear! I feel very much troubled. Will you walk up and see her?"

"Shall we go up, Martha?" said Caroline, looking toward her young friend.

"Perhaps we'd better not, as she's so ill," replied Martha. "It will do her no good, but may disturb her."

"Very true. No, ma'am, we won't see her now," said Caroline, turning to Mrs. Wheeler; "but I'll call around this afternoon. I hope it may not be so serious as you fear."

"You are very kind. Oh yes, I hope she may be better soon; but I'm afraid. When one breaks down from being overworked, as she has been, they don't always get back their strength again."

"Your new bonnet has been purchased at too great a price!" said Miss Mayfield, with some sternness of manner, as soon as she was in the street again with Martha Grier. She felt strongly on the subject, and determined to give her friend the full force of the reproof she deserved, even at the risk of offending her. "Wicked and worldly-minded as I am, Martha, I had too much religion to do what you have done. So far from requiring Miss Wheeler to over-tax her strength, in order that I might have a new bonnet for Sunday, I required her to lay the unfinished work aside the moment I understood she was indisposed. I not only spoke for myself, but for you also—thinking that you, who served God so devotedly, could not but regard with human feelings the poor, who, he hath said, are always with us. But it seems that I gave you credit for more charity than you possessed. By your own acknowledgment, you required her to resume the work I had, speaking for you, said that she might lay aside. Pardon this freedom of speech. I say what I do, not to pain you, but to make you sensible of your error. Piety and charity must go hand in hand. True religion is to regard man as well as to worship God."

The two young friends were now at a point where their ways divided. The eyes of Martha were upon the pavement.

"Good morning," said she, in a low voice, as they paused. Her face was averted.

"Good morning," returned Caroline, in a tone kinder than it was a moment before.

They met, a few hours afterward in the sick-room of Mary Wheeler. Martha's new bonnet did not grace her head on that occasion. Indeed, she never wore it afterward. She could not. The sight of it rebuked her too strongly. Happily, the illness of the young milliner did not prove so disastrous as was at first feared. In less than a week, she was able to be at work again, though several weeks elapsed ere her health was entirely restored.

Martha and Caroline are still friends; but the former has not again ventured to read the latter a lecture on the sin of fashionable dressing, carnal-mindedness, and pleasure-taking.



BEFORE AND AFTER THE ELECTION.

PART I.

Before the Election.

"AH, Patrick! How are you, my friend and fellow-citizen?" said Mr. R——, to Patrick Murphy, a newly created republican from the green island. "How are you?" And he grasped the hand of the Irishman and shook it warmly. "How is Mrs. Murphy, and all the little ones at home?"

"Well, I thank ye," returned Patrick familiarly. "And how's y'r honour?"

"First-rate, my friend,—first-rate. Won't you take something to drink, Patrick?"

"Well, I don't care if I do," returned the willing Irishman, "if it's only for the sake of the good cause."

"You may well say for the good cause," responded R——; "the cause of the people. It is for equal rights that we are now struggling, my poor but honest friend. For the right to breathe the pure air of heaven. For the right to think, and speak, and act as freemen. Men in power are riding it over us rough-shod. They are crushing the very life out of us. The privileged few gather to themselves all the good things in the land, and leave the great multitude, the mass of the people, the bone and sinew of the nation, like dogs to eat the crumbs that fall from their tables. But there's a good time coming, Patrick—a good time coming. A little while, and there will be a great change."

"Yis, y'r honour, that th'r wull."

The candidate—for be it understood, that it was on the eve of an election, and that R—— was a candidate for a seat in the State legislature—now advanced toward the bar—they had entered a drinking-house—saying—

"What will you take, Mr. Murphy?"

"Ony thing ye plaze."

"Say brandy and water?"

"Fust-rate," replied the Irishman, with feeling.

"Here's to your good health, Mr. Murphy," said R——, as he lifted his glass, bowing with a graceful and well-assumed deference to his companion.

"The same till you," returned Murphy familiarly, as he poured half a tumbler of pure brandy down his capacious throat.

"And now, my worthy friend," said R——, laying his hand on the shoulder of the Irishman and drawing him aside, "how is the good cause progressing in your particular neighbourhood?"

"You're safe in our ward by a hundred majority."

"D'ye think so?"

"Faith, an' ye are. I was down at McPhelin's tavern last night until twelve o'clock. There warn't but three men there that dared to open their mouths for L——, and I rather think their bones a'n't done aching yet."

"How so?"

Murphy doubled his huge fist, and assumed a pugilistic attitude.

"No fighting, I hope?" said R——.

"No—no. Only a bit of a scrimmage. There was a rowdy Yankee there, who insulted y'r honour; and the way I chastised him would have done y'r heart good."

"Insulted me? Ah! what did he say?"

"Yis; and he insulted the great body of y'r constituents into the bargain, the spalpeen!"

"How? What did he say of me?"

"He said that y'r honour cared no more for a poor mon than for the dirt under y'r feet; and that after the election you wouldn't let me, in particular, touch you with a forty-foot pole."

"He said that, did he?"

"Indade, y'r honour, and that's jist what he did say. But if he didn't feel the weight of a heavy bunch of bones, call me a liar. He'll have blue ribbons around his eyes for a month. It'll be as much as the bargain if he get to the polls to-morrow."

"And so we are certain of your ward?"

"Sure as death; and I take credit to meself for one-half the success. I've worked hard in the good cause, Mr. R——."

"It's the cause of the people; or, more emphatically speaking, the cause of the poor man. The rich and the privileged classes—the capitalists and monopolists of the day—are crushing the very life out of you. This is the time for effectual resistance. You must break the chains of oppression now, or they remain fastened upon you for ever. The country of your adoption expects much of you, Mr. Murphy. Do not disappoint her. Remember, that the vote of a poor man is equal in value to that of the proudest nabob in the land. Never lose sight of that fact, my friend. A convert to our side, no matter who or what he is, a drunkard in the gutter, or a lazy pauper in the almshouse, balances off the vote of one of your silk-stock-ing gentry on the other side. Votes are what we want, then—votes—votes—votes. Let that be ever before your eyes. You'll be at the public meeting to-night?"

"'Dade, and it's what I wull."

"That's right. And you must bring along as many staunch adherents of the good cause as you can find."

"Trust me for that, Mr. R——."

"Mr. P—— is not on our side?"

"He? No—no! He belongs to the silk-stock-ing party. What d'ye think he said to me yesterday? 'See here, Murphy,' says he, 'if you don't quit this drinking and rowdying about, and attend better to y'r business, you and I'll have to part.' Drinking and rowdying about, indade!—I knew what he meant. It was the political matters he objected till. He wanted to interfare with my freedom, and compel me to vote his way."

"Is it possible?"

"'Dade, and it is."

"What did you say to him?"

"Say till him? Why, jist nothing at all, at all. But didn't I look as black as a thunder-cloud?"

"Don't be afraid, my excellent friend," said the candidate, laying his hand on the Irishman's shoulder, and speaking deliberately. "Do your duty as a man, and fear nothing. What wages does P—— give you?"

"A paltry twenty dollars a month, bad luck till him!"

"For the valuable services of a man like you?"

"It's ivery cint."

"Possible! It's little better than starvation?"

"'Dade, and ye may well say thot. It's little more nor starvation. I wonder how much better he is nor me, or any of the poor men around him, out of whose sweat and blood he is coining goold and dollars."

"He's not half so good, my honest friend. You're worth a dozen like him. It's you that ought to be riding in a carriage, instead of one like him."

"The likes o' him!" contemptuously ejaculated Murphy.

"There's a better time coming," said the candidate encouragingly. "Work hard and push through the good cause at this election. Once let our party come into power, and you'll see a change that will be worth calling a change. There are plenty of fat offices waiting for the working friends of the cause; and you belong, emphatically to that class."

"Yis, indade! I'm a working man out and out."

"That's well known. I've heard you spoken of a dozen times. More than one of our leading men have their eyes on you."

"We're bound to bate."

"But we will have to work for it. Don't forget that. Our opponents are wide awake."

"Och! And ye needn't tell me that, Musther R——. Don't I know? But, as I said, we're bound to bate; and we will bate. And when we've won the election, what kind of an office do you think I can get? How large will be the salary?"

"Nothing less than seven or eight hundred dollars."

"So much as that? Och, blood-er-nouns, but won't I be illigant! Eight hundred dollars! I feel rich already. Who cares for Mr. P——? Bad'cess till him!"

"Don't forget the meeting to-night," said R——, now moving away.

"Niver fear. I'll be there."

"And, above all, be at your post to-morrow. It is the great day of battle, and unless every soldier is in the field, the enemy may conquer. Go early to the polls and vote your ticket, and then see that every man over whom you have an influence does the same thing. A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, will do the work for us. Then, you know the motto—'To the victors belong the spoils.' Good-by, my friend." And the candidate shook Murphy warmly by the hand, and left him.

"Pah!" he muttered to himself, with disgust and impatience, as he got fairly clear of the vulgar Irishman. "I shall be glad when this work is over. I'm half sick with disgust, and half mad with a fretting sense of humiliation. But they are our tools, and we must work with them. After our work is done, it will be an easy matter to throw them aside."

Patrick Murphy had been in the country just long enough to secure a legal naturalization, and thus get the power of a vote in our elections. As to the constitution of the United States, he had never read the first article; and his ideas of the spirit of our institutions were bounded on all sides by the word liberty. Soon after his arrival, he became aware that duties and responsibilities, undreamed of in the "ould cuntry," were resting upon him. He was "one of the people," upon whom reposed the welfare of the nation. There was a party in power, charged with aiming to restore the old monarchical and aristocratical privileges that were such a curse to Europe, and seeking to trample the poor working man under foot. Pat was soon politically indoctrinated by the party that first gained his ear, flattered his self-love, and excited his natural belligerence; and as whisky, an article to the use of which he was born, flowed as free as water at the headquarters of the party, his affections were not only won, but firmly retained.

Pat's first electioneering experience was the one that brought him in familiar intercourse as an equal with Mr. R——, than whom there was not, in feeling, a more

thorough aristocrat to be found. He was one of those who really despise every thing below them; but, being a lover of power and an office-seeker, he could talk of the dear people, and shake them by the hand with an appearance of interest and regard, while in his heart he loathed their very presence. His manner of treating Murphy completely turned the Irishman's head, and made him so insolent in his manner to his employer, a Mr. P——, that the latter had been several times tempted to dismiss him from his store, where he was engaged as labourer and porter.

On the night before the election, Murphy was at the public meeting, as he had promised. While R—— occupied the stand as speaker, he stood close beside him, hurraing and throwing his hat in the air at every emphatic sentence. Far above every other voice was heard his, ever and anon shouting, "R—— and the papple, for ever!"

After the adjournment of the meeting, he met R—— at the ward-house, and was hand and glove with him for the space of an hour. When he started for home about one o'clock in the morning, his mind had become so confused by drink or self-conceit, most probably the former, that he was in serious doubt whether he were not the candidate for election himself, and R—— only one of the working members of the political firm. Murphy had some doubts whether he would go to the store at all on the next day. It was the great election day, when a battle was to be fought, and when every man should be at his post and ready to do his duty. After some debate, he concluded to go and open Mr. P——'s store, and put the counting-room in some order, previous to the arrival of the clerks. Then he would take the day to himself.

It was about half-past eight o'clock that Patrick Murphy presented himself to the owner of the store, and, with an air of unusual self-importance, said—

"I shall be absent the rest of the day, Musther P——."

"How so, Patrick?" inquired his employer.

"It's 'lection day."

"Well, what of that? Have you a vote?"

"Sure and I have, as much as the best of yez."

"Then you're naturalized?"

"'Dade, and I am thot."

"But it won't take you all day to vote. Half an hour, or an hour, at most, is long enough for you to be absent from the store."

"I've something else to do besides voting. I'm one of the ward committee to attend the polls."

"You are!" Mr. P—— spoke in a tone of contempt that rather nettled Murphy.

"Yez needn't fash a body in that way, Musther P——. Ise got rights and privileges as well as ony other mon, if I am poor," he answered a little indignantly.

"I've no wish to interfere with your rights, Patrick," said Mr. P—— seriously. "As a citizen, your right and duty is to vote, and time enough for that I have no desire to withhold. You can go and cast your vote, and then return to your work, as I shall do. But to release you from your obligation to me, that you may have time to meddle in what doesn't concern you, and interfere with other men's freedom in voting, is what I cannot do. To-day is a busy day in the store. We have a large amount of goods to pack, and cannot dispense with your services."

"My duty to my adopted country"——

"You needn't talk to me after that fashion, Patrick," interrupted Mr. P—— impatiently. "Vote your vote, if you wish to do so, and leave the country to take care of itself. It will get on well enough without any of your meddling interference."

"O yis. That's the way ye nabobs try to lord it over us poor men, when ye think ye have us in y'r power," retorted Murphy in an insolent tone. "But I'm not jist ready to kneel down and let yez put y'r foot on my neck."

"My friend," said Mr. P—— sharply—he was by this time quite angry—"I don't want to bandy any words with you. You can go to the polls and vote. I'll give you an hour for that purpose; and you can vote for his Satanic Majesty, if it please your fancy, for all I care. But if you are not here at the expiration of an hour, I'll hire a man in your place."

"Musther P——"—

"I will hear no more on the subject," replied the merchant, turning quickly away, and walking back into his counting-room.

Murphy stood cogitating a few moments, and then muttering indignantly, "No purse-proud nabob shall lord it over me!" walked erectly, and with a firm bearing, from the store.

What did he care for the loss of a paltry situation like that, when in a few days he would be, in all probability, a custom-house officer, enjoying an income of a thousand or twelve hundred dollars.

All day long Patrick Murphy worked at the polls, in his ward and out of his ward, at any and every thing in which those who had the superintendence of affairs chose to employ him. He was an important man—in his own eyes. The United States was a great country for nature's true nobility—honour and freedom attended them as hand-maidens.

The sun at last went down, and the polls were closed. Patrick Murphy would have bet his life on the result. His side had won, of course; and, if the truth were known, through his important aid. How deeply and heartily did he despise his old employer, who had attempted to restrict his political rights, and to abridge his freedom as an American citizen. There were times during the day, when indignation and whisky raised his feelings to such a height that, had he encountered Mr. P—— in the street, he would have been strongly tempted to insult and even maltreat him.

After ten o'clock, returns from various wards began to come in. This was the exciting time. Now one party was ahead, and now the other. The poll was exceedingly close. Patrick Murphy began to feel uncomfortable. Several times during the evening, since the closing of the polls, he had encountered Mr. R——. But, somehow or other, the candidate did not recognise him. He was too much engaged with others. What did he care for the weak, vulgar tool of his ambition now? Nothing! Murphy began to shrink toward his natural dimensions. In other words, to feel something of his own insignificance.

At last the result was fully known. R—— and his

entire party were beaten. Murphy was about sober enough to comprehend the disastrous nature of this intelligence, when it came with a shock upon his unwilling ears. One more glass of whisky, and he took homeward, at midnight, his disconsolate way alone, and, tumbling himself into bed, was soon lost in drunken slumber.

PART II.

After the Election.

WHEN Patrick Murphy, the independent voter, awoke on the next morning and collected his thoughts, he had some strange feelings. It took him some time to comprehend clearly the fact that election day had passed, and that his party had been signally defeated. Alas! all the fine offices, in the distribution and enjoyment of which he was to have had a share, were in the hands of the victors. The beautiful visions that had floated before his imagination were all melting into thin air. He was not to ride in his coach yet. Deep and heavy was the sigh that accompanied this conviction, as he turned himself in bed and sought in his mind for some comforting reflections.

"I've made some powerful acquaintances ony how," he at length said, by way of consolation. "Musther R—— is a jewel of a mon. Worth his weight in goold. If I have lost the sitation at Mr. P——'s, it was in his cause; and he'll not see me suffer."

Murphy's head was none of the clearest when he arose; nor were either his bodily or mental sensations the most agreeable. The amount of money in his purse was just nothing at all, as he would himself have expressed the fact if called upon to do so, and there were only about five dollars due him at the old place he had so foolishly given up. Where the bread and potatoes for the "wife and childther" were to come from was not very clear to his mind. But he strove to brace himself up with the idea of having made a number of powerful acquaintances, who would stand by him in his extremity as he had stood by the good cause of the people.



After the Election.

After breakfast, Murphy went forth and repaired to the head-quarters of the party, where he found a goodly number assembled to hear the returns from the county and State, and to encourage each other in their local defeat, by mutual assurances of success in the general result. Most of these were men who had bets pending on the State election. Those who had striven for local success, in the hope of securing individual benefit when the distribution of offices came, had gone back to their stores, shops, or offices, striving to be content with a lot they had fondly hoped to better. Few of those around him were familiar to the Irishman, and those that he did recognise took no notice of him.

"How are you, Musther B——?" he said, walking up to a gentleman who stood conversing with a friend. The man looked at him for a moment indifferently, and then merely answered in a rude, somewhat contemptuous manner—

"How are you, Pat?" and, turning his back toward him, went on with his conversation.

Murphy didn't just like this. It was so different from Mr. B——'s manner of speaking to him on the day before. Then it was "Mr. Murphy," or, "My dear, good fellow," or, "How are you, my friend and fellow-citizen?" accompanied by a cordial grip of the hand. After three or four attempts, about as successful as this, to renew acquaintance with others who happened to come in his way, Patrick Murphy, with his feelings rapidly declining toward zero, took his departure from head-quarters, and strolled down to the ward-house—the scene of his principal electioneering achievement.

"Hallo, Pat! How d'ye feel this morning?" was the salutation he received from a loungee at the bar, as he entered. "Didn't save the nation, after all. Never mind, Pat! don't look so cast down about the matter. Better luck next time. You've one consolation; you did your duty."

"Yes, and who thanks him to-day?" laughed, or rather half-sneered another independent elector, who had already found out that he was of far less importance on the day after than on the day before the election. "Yesterday he

was one of the people, patted on the shoulder and cajoled by Mr. Broad-cloth-and-calfskin; but to-day he's a foolish Irishman. Ha! ha! We the people? It's very fine, and sounds first-rate; but it's all sound and fury, meaning just nothing at all, at all, Pat Murphy, my darlint. Come, Pat, won't you treat?"

Pat thrust his hand into his pocket, and then drawing it forth slowly, shook his head, and sighed—

"Haven't a red cint left to bless meself."

"Just my own interesting condition, Pat."

"Have you seen Musther R—— the day?" asked Murphy.

"Yes; but he looked as sour as a lemon. It would take a power of sugar to sweeten him."

"He's disappointed, in coorse."

"A'n't he?"

"Well, as for Musther R——, I can say wan thing of him honestly. He's a jontleman, ivery inch. He knows a mon when he sees him; and can appreciate merit in the humblest. Bad luck till the party that bate him, say I!"

"He's like all the rest of 'em," replied the man to this. "Mighty fine and nice when they want your vote. But too good to share the same sunshine with you after the election. I know 'em all from A to Z."

"I'll not stand and hear a jontleman like Musther R—— abused afther that fashion," retorted Murphy indignantly.

"Won't you, indeed?" was sneeringly replied.

"Indade, and I won't, thin. He's my friend, and I'll hold ony mon till account that spakes against him."

Hearing this, three or four bar-room loungers, who wanted a little excitement, drew instantly around the Irishman, and began chafing him on the subject of his "friend" R——. In a little while his hot blood was boiling over, and the muscles of his hands contracting spasmodically. A fight ensued, in which Murphy was severely beaten, and then pitched headlong into the street.

As the Irishman gathered himself up, and stole off like a whipped cur, he began to comprehend something of the

difference between before and after the election—a new experience for him. Since the closing of the polls on the previous evening, he had been steadily shrinking toward his former dimensions, and he was pretty near down to his old size by this time. Before the election, he was a man of importance in the nation. Great events depended on his efficient action. Now he was simply Patrick Murphy, and he could make little more out of himself. He was but a grain of sand on the sea-shore.

In this state of humiliation, Murphy went home at dinner-time. He dared not go home before; for in that case his wife Biddy, who had a temper and a tongue of her own, and who had never liked his meddling in politics, would discover that had not been at work, and there would be a flare-up in consequence.

While meditating on his unhappy condition, Murphy, whose confidence in R—— was unimpaired, resolved to go and state to him that he had been turned off by Mr. P—— for his political opinions, and was now without the means of earning bread for his family. He did not in the least doubt that R—— would immediately procure for him a much better place than the one he had lost.

Elated by this idea, Murphy left his home after dinner, and called at the handsome residence of R——.

"Can I see Musther R——?" he asked confidently of the servant who came to the door.

"He's engaged and cannot be seen," replied the servant.

He'll see me, I know. Tell him that Musther Murphy wishes to spake wid him just a minute."

The servant hesitated to deliver the message, but Murphy urged the matter, and he finally consented to do as he wished. In a few moments he returned, and said that Mr. R—— was engaged, and couldn't see any one.

"Did yez tell him me name?" asked Murphy.

"I did."

"And what did he say?"

"I have told you what he said," returned the servant rather sharply. "He cannot see you."

Poor Murphy turned away, feeling still more painfully his own insignificance. A few days before, he was a very

lord in influence; now, even a common house-servant treated him with contempt. Still he had confidence in R——, the defeated candidate. R—— knew him as a man, and appreciated his value. He had sacrificed every thing for R——, and he was sure that R—— would stand by him now.

For an hour or two the Irishman sauntered about the streets or lounged in bar-rooms, meditating on his unhappy condition. He then, in a humbled frame of mind, determined to call on Mr. P——, apologize for his conduct on the day before, and ask to be taken back into his employment. P—— received him coolly; and when Murphy volunteered an apology, told him that it was too late, as he had already hired a man in his place.

"Then yez proscribes me for opinion's sake," said Pat, growing insolent when no hope of favour remained.

"No," coolly answered the merchant. "I merely filled the place you left. I don't care any thing about a man's opinions. I regard only his ability to serve me in the situation I want filled. If he leaves my work to go and interfere with the freedom of elections at the polls for a whole day, I will discharge him, no matter what his political opinions may be, and I told you that beforehand. So you've only yourself to blame. Here's the balance of money due you. And when next you get a good place don't throw it up for the sake of some brawling candidate who doesn't care three beans for you."

Saying this, the merchant turned from Murphy, who retired slowly, with anger, mortification, and disappointment struggling in his mind for the preponderance. He had only gone about a block from the store of Mr. P——, when his eyes were gladdened by the sight of R——, who stood talking with two or three gentlemen. Murphy waited at a respectful distance until R—— was disengaged, and then approached him with his hat held deferently in his hand. R—— did not appear to observe him, and was passing on, when the Irishman said—

"How are yez, Mr. R——?"

The defeated candidate half paused and stared at him, while his brow contracted. Murphy smiled, and advanced

nearer, expecting the countenance of his friend suddenly to change, and his hand to seize his warmly.

"Who are you? And what do you want?" now fell from the lips of R——, while his face wore a more repulsive aspect.

"Don't yez know Musther Murphy?" asked the voter.

"Murphy! Pah! I've had more Pat Murphys running after me than would freight a ship. What do you want?"

Poor Murphy was dumb with astonishment. He stood like one aghast for a few moments, and then turned slowly away. He had shrunk now below his former dimensions, and felt not only insignificant, but powerless and wretched. This was the unkindest cut of all.

Since election day, Pat Murphy has had a pretty hard time to get bread for his family. At hod-carrying, cellar-digging, and street-scraping, he has been working off and on; and though he has lived in hopes of getting another situation in a store, that hope has not yet been realized.

When election times come round again he will be patted on the shoulder, "called one of the people," "my friend," "bone and sinew," and all that, and be hand and glove with a set of men who would not pick him out of the gutter at any other season. And Pat, forgetful of the lesson that he has learned, will be flattered into the belief that he is "somebody," and made to pull in the traces under some political driver, while of any use, and then be turned out to get pasture where he can find it. How many campaigns it will take to endow him with a grain of common sense or independent thought, is a sum that our knowledge of figures will not enable us to cipher out. But we shall see.

PART III.

Patrick Murphy Returns to his Political Friends.

It was near the close of a sultry day in August, and a poor, toil-worn Irishman "might have been seen" wearily wending his way upward toward the summit of a house, with a hod of bricks upon his shoulder.

"Bad 'cess till Musther R——!" fell, half-angrily, from the Irishman's lips, as he gained the elevation he was seeking, and deposited his load upon the scaffold. "Bad 'cess till Musther R——!" he repeated. "If it hadn't been for him I'd still be houlding my good siteation in P——'s store, instead of being kilt to death wid this hod-carrying."

And then Mister Patrick Murphy—for it was that independent citizen—shouldered his empty hod, and commenced retracing his steps down the ladder for another instalment of building-materials. Just as he reached the ground, a voice, whose tones were instantly recognised, said with animation—

"Why, Mr. Murphy, is this you? How are you, my old friend and fellow-citizen? How are you?"

And Mr. R——, the very man Patrick had been thinking about, stood smiling, with extended hand, before him.

To be thus addressed by a "gentleman" was more than the long-nursed anger of Murphy could withstand, and it melted away into good nature, like frost-work in the morning sunshine.

"How are yez, Musther R——?" he returned, as he left the candidate take his hand and shake it heartily.

"Oh, bright as a May morning!" said R——, still hold-



Returns to his Political Friends.

ing the Irishman by the hand. "But how are you getting on now, Mr. Murphy?"

"Bad enough, and plaze y'r honour," replied Patrick.

"Ah, I'm sorry for that. Have you been unfortunate?"

"'Dade, thin, and have I. That 'lection business kilt me dead."

"How so, Mr. Murphy? We were beaten, it is true; but how did it affect you personally?"

"Mr. P—— turned me off for going to the polls on 'lection day, and it's been hard time wid me iver since, I can tell yez."

"Turned you off, Mr. Murphy, for voting your sentiments as an American citizen!" exclaimed R——, in well-feigned astonishment.

"Yis, it's just thot, Musther R——," said Murphy with much feeling. Already the hope of making capital for future interest out of that circumstance was beginning to form itself in his mind.

"Vile proscription! Thus it is that these nabobs of our land seek, as in the old country, to bind the free consciences of the people, and to trample on their political rights. You felt this in Ireland, Mr. Murphy; and it was to escape such tyranny that you left the beautiful home of your fathers and came to happy America. Shall the heel of the oppressor be on your neck here also? Spirit of liberty, forbid it! Mr. Murphy, we must break down this league of the rich against the poor. We can do it, and we will. In this cause I have embarked, and I will die by it. What greater glory can any man desire than to be known as the friend of the people?"

"Nabobs!" responded Patrick, indignantly taking the cue. "Yis! Vile, oppressing nabobs! If I had my will o' them!"

And the Irishman clenched his fist.

"This is rather a hard kind of business, Mr. Murphy," said R——, changing the subject. "A man like you ought to be doing something better than carrying bricks up a ladder."

"'Dade and he ought, Musther R——."

"Come round to my house to-night, Mr. Murphy. I'd like to have some talk with you."

"Yez lives in the same place?"

"Oh yes. Come about nine o'clock. I will be disengaged then."

"I'll be there to the minute, Musther R——."

"Very well. And now, good day. I rather think we'll find you some better work to do than this."

All the Irishman's indignation toward R——, so long cherished, was gone. His next trip up the ladder was accomplished in half the time occupied in the last ascent; and when he came down again, it was "on the run."

Precisely at nine o'clock, dressed in his Sunday suit, which was not one of particular elegance, Patrick was at Mr. R——'s beautiful residence. He rang the bell, and, almost instantly, the door was opened—not by a servant, but by Mr. R—— himself.

"Ah, you're the man after all, Mr. Murphy; punctual to the minute!" said he, grasping the Irishman's hand. "Come in, my good fellow. Come in," and he almost dragged him into the house.

In a room in the third-story, to which Murphy was conducted, two or three men were found sitting at a table, on which were decanters and glasses.

"Mr. Murphy, gentlemen."

Thus the Irishman was announced in a manner the most courteous.

"Ah, how are you, my honest friend? How are you? Happy, indeed, to see you!"

Such was the words of welcome that greeted his appearance.

"Take a chair, Mr. Murphy, said R——, and he handed the Irishman to a seat, with an air of deference and courtesy that was particularly flattering to the easily duped son of Erin.

"Well, gentlemen," said R——, after they had all resumed their places at the table and taken a glass round, "this is the Mr. Murphy of whom I was speaking to you; an honest, hard-working man, who has been proscribed for opinion's sake. No man has laboured harder or more efficiently in our cause than he, and it will be a burning disgrace to our party—the party of the people, the sworn advocate of the oppressed and trampled upon—if we let

him suffer for his devotion to true principles. This man has a family, sir—a family to whom he is dearly attached, and for whom he's toiling like a galley-slave at the oar. Previous to the last election, he had a good situation and a good salary in the store of P——; but, because he worked in our cause, P—— turned him off to starve with his wife and his little ones, for all he cared!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed the men at the table, lifting their hands in astonishment. "To think that such a spirit exists in our country!"

"A spirit," resumed Mr. R——, "that, if not checked, will prostrate our liberties beneath the iron heel of oppression. What is a poor man in the eyes of one like P——? Of less value than his horse! And he is but the type of his party."

To this there was a warm response from all present.

"And now, Mr. Murphy," resumed R——, addressing the Irishman, "the time has come when another strong effort must be made to break through the party lines that have been drawn by these poor-oppressing, blood-sucking aristocrats! At the last campaign, we drove them back, and came near routing them, horse, foot, and dragoons. This time, if we unite all our forces, victory is certain; and you know, my honest friend, that to the victors belong the spoils. No man did better service to the good cause at the last election than you, Mr. Murphy; and now that the tug of war is about to come again, your bleeding country calls upon you, and asks for aid. Shall she call in vain? No; not when her voice reaches the ears of Patrick Murphy, the man who has felt the crushing weight of oppression. What say you, Mr. Murphy? Are you with us again?"

Thus appealed to, Murphy instantly replied with enthusiasm—

"Faix and am I, Musther R——! Bad 'cess till the nabobs! I'll have it out wid 'em yet."

"You've got the right kind of stuff in you, I see," remarked one of those present.

"I'm an Irishman," said Murphy proudly.

"And an honour both to the country of your birth and the country of your adoption," responded R——.

By this time Murphy was fully prepared to enter into the views of the individual who wanted his "valuable aid" again. Flattered into blindness, he allowed the bit to be once more placed in his mouth, and bearing on the rein, moved forward to the right or the left, at the will of his drivers. It was demonstrated to him, with the utmost clearness, why the party failed of success at the last campaign, and why it would now be sure to gain the victory. And his reward was to be a clerkship in the post-office, at a salary of six hundred a year. Moreover, R—— said that he must throw away his hod, and come at once into the service of the party. And, as the labourer was worthy of his hire, it was agreed to pay him one dollar a day until the period of election arrived.

Again was Mr. Murphy a man of consequence in his own eyes. Higher ranged his head, and more stately was his step as he walked homeward from the house of R——. But he was doomed to have his ardour somewhat cooled; for on announcing what had just happened, to his better-half, Biddy, that lady became exceedingly indignant, called him a fool, and sundry other names of like character, and vowed if he got himself into any more trouble with his politics, she'd "take the childther and lave him."

On the next morning, Murphy waited on Mr. R—— again, according to appointment, when arrangements were made for attending a "Harvest Home" to be celebrated at a village in the county which embraced the district in which R—— was a candidate for election. There were to be present at this assemblage some of the leading men of the party, with many of whom Murphy had worked side by side in the last campaign, and he was made to believe that his appearance among them would be hailed with the greatest enthusiasm.

"We looked upon you at the last election as one of our best men," said R——. "Already more than a dozen old friends have been inquiring after you. Your appearance, Mr. Murphy, will put new life into our people, for they know you of old."

R—— then placed a five-dollar bill in the hands of the Irishman, as the beginning of his pay in the new service,

and five more to be used for electioneering purposes among his own countrymen. Particularly was he instructed to see to the naturalization of all those who had been in the country long enough to entitle them to citizenship, and to pay all attendant expenses, if a pledge was given to vote the party ticket.

Again the Irishman began to feel his own importance, and to swell beyond his natural dimensions. It was night before he returned home, and then he was, to use a vulgar, but very expressive word, a little "groggy." The moment he entered, Biddy said, with some sharpness of voice—

"Pathrick, ye convict! And where have ye bin all the day? Musther P—— sent for yez this mornin', and wants to see yez."

"Bad luck till Mr. P——!" returned Murphy. "Bad luck till him, I say!" and he staggered into a seat.

"Are ye crazy, mon?" exclaimed Biddy. "No doubt Musther P—— wants ye back agin in his store."

"Bad 'cess till him! I'll niver darken his door agin, the aristocratic, silk-stockin' nabob! Didn't he turn me aff for votin' me sentiments as a free American citizen? Didn't he, I say? Bad 'cess till him, the spalpeen!"

"Y'r a drunken fool, that's what ye are!" said Biddy, in wrath uncontrollable. But, knowing how fruitless a discussion would be with her husband while under the influence of liquor, she curbed her anger, and had little more to say during the evening. But, on the next morning, as soon as Patrick was fairly awake, she began—

"Pathrick," said she, "are ye going till see Musther P——?"

"No, faix, and I am not!" replied Patrick. "I'm done wid Mr. P——, kith and kin. Didn't he turn me aff for votin' my sintiments? Didn't he? Ay, fegs! And if iver I darken his door, it 'll do him good."

It was all in vain that Biddy argued, scolded, persuaded; her husband was not to be moved from his resolution. There was a better chance before him than any situation in P——'s store. He was to be a clerk in the post-office. That was settled; and, moreover, up to the period of

election, was to receive a dollar a day for doing what was equivalent to "just nothing at all, at all."

For three or four days, Murphy spent his time idling about taverns, and at night going home in a condition that made all Biddy's attempts to reach his feelings abortive. Then the time for celebrating the "Harvest Home" came, and he was called for in a carriage by R—— and two other members of the party. Such an honour elated him almost out of himself; and even Biddy, who knew that her husband was no uncommon man, began to think him of even greater importance than she had yet imagined.

The "Harvest Home," as it was called, was nothing more nor less than a political gathering, for the purpose of gaining party influence. It was held in a certain neighbourhood pretty thickly settled with Emerald Islanders, and the particular work Murphy was wanted for on the occasion was to make interest for R—— among his countrymen. A bullock was to be roasted, and an entertainment, consisting of an abundance of things eatable and drinkable, provided.

When R—— arrived on the ground, accompanied by his willing tool, the latter was introduced with all formality to about a dozen substantial leaders of the party, office-expectants, and others personally interested in the approaching election, who treated him with the most marked attention, asked him to drink with them, and talked to him as if he were an individual of the first importance.

"Welcome back among your friends?" said one.

"Ah, my old friend Murphy," said another, "you are just the man I've been wanting to see. How are you? How are you?" And he shook the Irishman's hand half off.

"Here's Mr. Murphy again!" exclaimed another. "Why, bless me! I'm as glad to see you as if I'd found a guinea!"

And so the changes were rung, and Murphy believed that all he heard was true. In return for the cordial welcome received, and the honour bestowed upon him at this reunion with the party, Murphy went to work in good

earnest, cheered on every now and then by some one of the leaders, with flattering words of encouragement like the following—

“You’re the man, Mr. Murphy!” Or—

“Ah, my fine fellow! If we had a little army of such as you, we’d sweep the nation!” Or—

“Talk to them, Murphy. That’s you! The best man among us!”

Never did Patrick Murphy work harder at cellar-digging or hod-carrying than on this occasion, in his efforts to make converts to the “cause of the people;” and between arguing, persuading, drinking, quarrelling, and such other efforts with his countrymen, he was so much overcome by sundown that his political friends had to send him home to his wife Biddy, in a furniture wagon. As he was not in a condition to feel the honour attendant on a ride with R—— in his carriage, such an honour was not wasted upon him.

On the next day, Mr. Murphy had a shocking bad headache, and was so sick and so much exhausted that he kept his bed until toward night, when he sallied forth, and took his way to McPhelin’s tavern, where he spent the evening in drinking, talking politics, and “going his death for R——,” whom he did not hesitate to declare, “A jontilman, ivery inch, and a raal friend o’ the hard-working paple!”

About twelve o’clock, he staggered homeward, carrying with him a black-eye and sundry bruises from hard fists on other parts of his body; the effects of which he did not get over for a week.

Thus, for a whole month, did Murphy serve the cause of the people, receiving his dollar a day, besides money to use “judiciously,” in treating and in other ways controlling the votes of the “better class of citizens,” whom he was specially chosen to influence. As the election-day approached, he became busier and busier, and finally was placed in charge of a “colony” of drunken vagabonds who would vote either way for a glass of grog. There were twenty of these, and he had them locked up in the loft of an old warehouse for two or three days, supplying them with as much as they could eat and drink all the

time, and generally managing to keep them too drunk to run away, even if they should manage to escape from their prison.

The particular work of Murphy, on the election-day, was to bring to the polls these vagabond voters, and as many others as he could drum up. To this end, he was supplied with a carriage and ten dollars to treat with. Faithfully did he perform his part, even to the injunction of R—— :

“Mr. Murphy, mind ! you must keep sober to-day.”

“Gloriously” the voting went on from the time the polls opened until their closing at six o’clock.

It was twelve when Patrick Murphy burst into the room where Biddy sat mending the tattered jacket of her eldest hopeful, swinging his cap about his head, and crying—

“We’ve bate ! we’ve bate ! Biddy, me darlint ! Hurrah for R—— and the cause of the papple ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !”

“Hish ! hish ! Patrick, now ! Ye’ll wake the childther, and alarm the whole neighbourhood !”

But Patrick was too intensely delighted at the great result achieved to care for such trifles. Seizing Biddy in his arms, he swung her round as lightly as if she had been a strip of a girl—and Biddy was not a baby in size—repeating the words—

“We’ve bate ! We’ve bate, darlint ! And now for the swate little corner in the post-office, and silks and satins for Mrs. Murphy ! Ha ! what do yez think of that, honey ? Pathrick Murphy knew what he was about !”

But we must leave the reader to imagine the rest of this scene. The party whose cause Patrick had espoused were the victors, sure enough. They had routed their opponents, in the common and expressive phrase used on such occasions, “horse, foot, and dragoons.”

Next for the sequel.



PART IV.

Murphy Abandons the Party in Disgust.

"THE victory gained, now for the spoils." If these very words were not used by some hundreds of the country's "devoted friends" on the morning that followed election-day, it was not because no such thought was in their hearts. As for Mr. Murphy, he arose from his bed a proud man. Through his important aid—of this, R—— and others had assured him over and over again—the great victory had been achieved; and he, of course, was sure of his reward.

"The fact is, Biddy, darlint," said he, as he sat over his potatoes and coffee—the dollar a day had not supplied as many wants as it should have done—"the fact is, I don't belave it's jist right till put me aff wid a beggarly place in the post-office, at five or six hundred a year. A man who has sarved the party as I have, desarves better thratement nor that, so he does."

"Plaze goodness!" responded Biddy, in a voice slightly troubled, "and I'd be thankful for thot, and niver think o' callin' it beggarly. Yez got y'r idess a little too elevated, Pathrick."

"Niver a bit, troth! I knows me desarvins, and I'll git them. They'll not put me aff wid the crumbs o' the table, I can tell them."

"Have yez ony money, Pathrick?" asked Biddy.

"Niver a rid cint, darlint. I spent ivery farthin' yesterday in buyin' up the votes; but I'll see Musther R—— the mornin'."

"But will he pay yez ony thing more, now that 'lection is over, Pathrick?"

"And why not, sure? Isn't he under an iverlastin' debt o' gratitude to me? Didn't he say that if I'd do me duty as he knew that I could do it, he'd niver forget me while the breath was in his mortal body?"

"But what are we to do for dinner the day, Pathrick? There isn't a loaf of bread nor a petatee more in the house. The childther must have food."

"Och! And can't yez jist git a little thrust at Mrs. Mulligan's for the day? I'll git plinty o' money when I see Musther R——."

"I don't know," replied Biddy. "We owe four dollars there now; and Mrs. Mulligan said, the last time I was there, that I needn't come for ony more thrust till the ould score was paid aff."

"Och! Bad 'cess till her stingy ould soul! But do you tell her, Biddy, darlint, that we've bate the bloody nabobs, and that I'm to have an affice, and that we're goin' to have hapes o' money, and that we'll dale with her for ivery thing. Jist say all that, Biddy, and she'll open her store till yez."

Biddy was not so sanguine, however, and doubted the effect of this particular mode of argumentation; whereupon Patrick called her an old fool, and started from the table in disgust.

After scraping off his wiry beard, and sprucing himself up as well as he could, Murphy sallied forth about nine o'clock to meet his fellow-victors, and rejoice with them over the party triumph. To head-quarters he repaired, in hopes of meeting R——. Dozens he found assembled there, who, like himself, had come to seek for some particular leader or leaders, and who were ready to shake hands with him, and exchange congratulations on the "glorious victory." But all this shaking of hands amounted to nothing. It put no money in the empty pocket of our friend Murphy.

"Have yez seen R——?" he inquired of one and another.

Some had seen the successful candidate and some had not. Of one individual to whom his inquiry was extended, he received in reply this interrogation—

"R——? and pray what do you want with him? An office already, Pat Murphy!"

"Do yez mane to insult me?" responded Murphy angrily.

"Oh no!" laughed the other. "But I'd like to give you a piece of good advice."

"Wull, and what is it?" inquired Murphy, evincing no little impatience.

"Why, just this, my friend:—If you've got any work to do, go and do it, and be thankful."

"What do yez mane?" Pat's fists were clenched involuntarily. This was an insult he could ill bear.

"I mean," was replied, "that you will find it more profitable than running after an elected candidate, or seeking for an office. R—— don't care three buttons for you, now that he's gained the day."

Just at this moment, R—— entered the room, and passed so close to the Irishman as almost to rub against him. Pat started forward, extending his hand, and saying, in a voice of exultation—

"Me congratulations, Musther R——!"

But, from some cause, R—— did not hear the Irishman's voice, nor recognise his person; and he was so quickly surrounded by his many "friends" that Murphy could not get near him. This fact, connected with the "good advice" he had just received, threw rather a damper upon the poor fellow's feelings. This state of mind was not improved by the several ineffectual attempts made to obtain an interview with R——, who was too much engaged with other and more congenial spirits to think or care for an obscure Irishman, whom he had duped into becoming an efficient tool for the accomplishment of his ends.

With troubled feelings, Murphy at length saw R—— depart. He followed him out quickly, and forcing his way up to the carriage which stood at the door, and into which R—— had just entered, said, in a somewhat agitated voice—

"Musther R——! Can I jist get a 'spakin' till yez?"

"To Colonel L——'s," said R—— to the driver, as if he had not heard Murphy. Then, waving his hand to the

little crowd on the pavement, and bowing and smiling, as the driver spoke to the horses, he swept away, with as little thought or care for the poor Irishman as if he had been one of the bricks in the pavement. Crest-fallen, and with a heavy weight on his feelings, Murphy walked slowly away. Still, he was willing to believe that R—— had not recognised him, and that so soon as he could obtain an interview, every thing would be done that he desired. He did not go home at dinner-time; for he was afraid to meet Biddy with his empty pockets and no prospects of filling them ahead. And as he had not, to use his own words, “a rid cint to bless himself wid,” he was compelled to go without food until his return in the evening.

In going from place to place, familiar during the progress of the canvass, and in meeting certain individuals with whom he had been hand and glove for weeks, he found that he was a man of far less consequence than before. Instead of cordial greetings and fine compliments, a cold “How are you, Murphy?” “Still loafing about, Pat?” or some such address, met him at every turn. Occasionally, an individual about as important as himself would seize his hand and half wring it off. But he would have willingly dispensed with these particular congratulatory manifestations.

About three o'clock, Murphy repaired to the residence of R——, and sent his name in by the servant, who brought back word that the gentleman was particularly engaged.

“Tell him,” said the Irishman, “that Mr. Murphy would jist like to spake wan word wid him. Jist wan word and no more—and won't kape him a minute.”

The servant went back, and, after a rather prolonged absence, returned and asked Murphy to walk in.

“Take a seat. Mr. R—— will be down in a little while,” said the servant, as he opened one of the parlour doors and motioned the Irishman to enter.

A quarter of an hour elapsed, and then R—— made his appearance. His face did not wear a very cordial aspect. It is true, there was a smile upon his lips, but it was a forced smile, fading quickly.

"Well, my good friend," said he coldly, "what can I do for you?"

He did not even say "Mr. Murphy."

The Irishman was chilled by the manner of R——, and felt himself strongly repulsed.

"I've worked hard for yez," said Pathrick, in a humble voice.

"You did your duty to the good cause; I'll give you credit for that, friend Murphy; and you'll get your reward."

"But how soon, Musther R——?"

"All in good time—all in good time," was answered, with some impatience.

"Ye knows, Musther R——, that I gave up my sitation"—

"At hod-carrying? Oh yes, I remember. Well, Pat, you've had a pretty easy time of it for a couple of months, and can go to work now with more spirit, sustained as you will be by the reflection that you have served your adopted country like a good and true citizen."

"But I gave up my sitation, Musther R——," said the Irishman, in a distressed tone of voice.

"You must find another, then, my friend. You can't expect to live in idleness. Every man must work to live."

This was said in a tone of stinging rebuke.

"I'm not afraid to work," returned Murphy. "But I've got no work. You promised me"—

"Office-hunting already! Why, don't you know, man, that I shall not take my seat in Congress for a year? I'm still only a private citizen."

"A year!" stammered Murphy in a husky voice. "A year, did yez say?"

"Certainly I did. The member's term, in whose place I have been elected, doesn't expire until the close of the present Congress. When I take my seat next fall, I will do all I can for you. But, until that time, you must go to work like an honest, industrious citizen. Your reward will come; never fear."

Murphy had arisen from his chair when R—— entered

the room, and was still standing on the floor, the member elect not having invited him to resume his seat.

"And now," said the latter, "you must excuse me. I have several friends in waiting."

And he bowed in a way that said "Be off!" almost as distinctly as if he had given utterance to the words.

Confounded and utterly cast down under a sense of mortification and distress, the Irishman turned away and retired in silence.

"Remember, William," he heard R—— say to his waiter, as he was passing to the door, speaking with some anger, "I'm not at home to any of these fellows."

Outside of the door, as he opened it, Murphy found two men of his own class, one of whom said—

"Can I see Mr. R——?"

"He is not at home," said the servant, appearing at the moment.

"When will he be in?" was inquired.

"I can't tell," was answered, and the door was shut in the man's face.

"It's a bloody lie!" said Murphy indignantly, half to himself and half aloud.

"He *is* in, then?" exclaimed one of the men.

"He's jist that!"

"Have you seen him?"

"Yis."

"Well?"

"And got a bit of cowl'd comfort for me pains; jist what ye'll git, if ye'r after ony favours."

And, with this he turned away, in no very pleasant mood of mind. As he was walking along, with his head bowed down and his eyes upon the pavement, some one said—

"Hi, Patrick! is this you?"

On looking up he recognised one of the clerks in Mr. P——'s store.

"Where have you been keeping yourself, Patrick? We spent a whole week some time ago in trying to find you."

"Indade!"

"Yes. The man we got in your place turned out

badly. We changed two or three times, and then Mr. P—— thought he'd give you another trial, if you were inclined to make a change. He'd seen you at work carrying bricks and mortar, and said he couldn't help pitying you."

"I'm obleeged till him for his kindness," replied Murphy, at once elated in prospect of a return to his old place. "Mr. P—— is a jontilman, I must say; and I was a fool iver to have left his employ. I'll go back wid pleasure."

"Ah, but, Patrick," replied the young man, in a tone of regret, "it is too late now. We couldn't find you, and so filled the place with another man, who is all that we could want."

"It's all bad luck!" exclaimed the Irishman, in a voice of distress. "I've a mind to go and 'thrown meself."

"But where were you, Pathrick? We left word at your house for you to come round to the store."

"Where was I, d'ye say? Faix, and I was mindin' other pable's business instid o' me ane."

"Indeed!"

"Yis. I was promotin' the election of R——, bad 'cess till him!"

"Ho! ho!" laughed the young man, in spite of the sadness of the Irishman's face. "Well, you *are* a fool! What good did you expect to gain from his election."

"He promised me a sitation in the post-office?"

"Did he? That's rich! What has he to do with the post-office?"

"I do'no'. But he promised that I should be rewarded."

"As he promised two or three hundred besides, as big fools as you are. He'll have nothing to do with the post-office. In fact, he won't take his seat in Congress for over a year; and then his influence, if he have any, will not go in your favour. He's got too many others to reward with the few crumbs it may be in his power to dispense."

The Irishman groaned, but made no reply.

"Good-morning, Patrick," said the clerk. "And take with you this piece of good advice: never put any faith

in the promises of a politician, made on the eve of an election, for he'll be sure to deceive you."

With this, the young man moved on, and the Irishman was left still sadder than before.

Of the toil and struggle through which the humbled Patrick Murphy, again shrunk down to his real dimensions, passed during the long, hard winter that followed, and of the sufferings endured by his poorly clothed, warmed, and fed, wife and children, we will not speak. They were severe enough. In the spring he went back to cellar-digging and hod-carrying, at which he worked until fall, when he was sought for again by his old political friends, who knew the value of his services, and was again wheedled by promises into taking the bit into his mouth. This time, however, he was a little wiser, and took care not to neglect his daily work. In the spring, a new party, triumphant at this election, were to come into power, and Murphy, a little better instructed than before, now understood that he must wait a few months before the time came for a distribution of political favours in the shape of comfortable offices; so he wisely accepted, for the winter, the place of coal-heaver in a coal-yard.

March at length came around, and a new party came into power. Then followed a general system of removals from office, and the appointment of new men. Murphy's time had at length come. There was a broad gleam of daylight ahead of him, and his heart beat high again with anticipation. He was an applicant for office, and pressed in among the crowd, eager as any to secure the reward of party service. At first, his ambition led him to select the post of inspector of the customs; then he changed from that to a clerk in the post-office; and afterward to a letter-carrier. But as he could get no one to sign him a recommendation to either of these places, he, upon the advice of one for whose opinion he had some respect, filed an application for the situation of night inspector, or, in other words, custom-house watchman. The running, coaxing, begging, and all manner of humiliation attendant on getting up his recommendations, were painful to even Murphy's rather obtuse sensibilities, and he more than once felt like giving up the effort in disgust, and falling

back, for life, upon honest, independent labour. As the signature of R——, the party member to Congress, was considered of importance, Murphy strove hard to get it. R——, with whom, after various trials, he at length obtained an interview, promised him all his influence to secure him the place he wanted, and said that he would make it his business to see the collector in his behalf that very day. (He had made the same promise to about sixty or seventy different office-seekers.) Murphy asked his signature to his recommendation; but this R—— declined giving, on the ground that he was called on every hour for such certificates, and that he could not sign all, and, therefore, signed none. It was in vain that Murphy urged his valuable aid in securing R——'s election; the member could not be brought to sign the paper, and the Irishman went away with some righteous indignation in his heart.

Still, for all this, through singular good fortune, Murphy got the appointment he sought, and felt that he was "a made man." In his elation, he was stimulated by certain individuals that were instantly attracted around him, to give his "friends" a regular "blow out." So he invited them to a supper at McPhelin's tavern, a place for which he had a particular regard.

Some twenty choice spirits responded to this invitation, and not only ate and drank the oysters and brandy he had provided, but ordered champagne and sherry by the dozen; and, in conclusion, broke up about two o'clock in the morning by breaking all the furniture in the room.

Sober and serious was Patrick Murphy on the next morning—Patrick Murphy, newly appointed night inspector to the custom-house, with a salary of five hundred a year. On that day he was to enter upon the duties of his office; or, rather on the evening following that day. Touching the doings of the night before he did not feel very comfortable. McPhelin's bill for the supper would, he was afraid, be larger than he intended to make it; and then the breakage of furniture might give him trouble.

All was quiet for about a week, during which time Murphy discharged his duties as an officer faithfully, and

kept away from McPhelin's. But the evil in search of us is sure to find us out. McPhelin's bill came at last, and proved to Murphy worse than all his fears. It stood thus—

For supper and wines.....	\$40
For breakage of furniture.....	30
	<hr/>
	\$70

Poor Murphy, already in debt some eighty or ninety dollars, besides two quarters' back rent, the result of his electioneering diversions, was confounded by such an unexpected bill. But there was no evading it. He had ordered the supper, and under his sanction the wines had been added. Moreover, the party introduced by him had broken the landlord's furniture, for which he very confidently demanded payment.

A day or two after the receipt of this document, the Irishman sat alone in one of the offices attached to the custom-house, meditating on what he had gained and lost by politics, and feeling in no very elevated frame of mind, when the messenger came in and handed him a letter. He broke the seal and read, with dismay, his dismissal from office, ample testimony having been received at the "Department," so said the communication, "that he was a drunken turbulent fellow, and not to be trusted by the government, which sought for sober, orderly men to fill its responsible stations."

This was too much for Patrick Murphy to bear patiently. Here was the result, after between two and three years' devotion of himself to party interests. Thus was he rewarded! A pleasant morsel placed before his eager lips, and then drawn hastily away! In the excitement and indignation of the moment, he tore his dismissal from office into a hundred pieces; and then, seizing a chair, as his frenzy increased, dashed to fragments a plaster bust of the chief magistrate of the nation that stood the only witness to his disgrace.

"Murphy, my good fellow, how are you?" exclaimed an old party leader and driver, who had obtained good

service out of the Irishman in former times. This was at the opening of the next political canvass.

Murphy, when thus addressed, was standing in front of P——'s store, back into which snug quarters he had found his way again.

"Purty well, I thank yez," returned the Irishman coldly.

"How are you getting along now?" said the other, not seeming to notice the indifference with which he was received.

"Fust-rate," answered Patrick laconically.

"Glad to hear it. No man deserves good fortune if you do not. Well, you see, election time is coming round again."

"Indade."

"A time when every good citizen is expected to do his duty."

"I did my duty wanst, and what"——

"That you did, Mr. Murphy, as hundreds can testify," interrupted the other.

"Humph! I know thot as wull as ony body."

"We want to see you down at head-quarters to-night," said the man, now laying his hand familiarly on Murphy's shoulder. "We can't do without your valuable aid."

"Be dad, and yez won't see me there!" returned Patrick, showing his teeth and knitting his great shaggy brows.

"Why not, my honest friend?" inquired the party leader.

"Don't honest frind me, if ye plaze! I'se abandoned yez all in disgust, so I have, bad 'cess till y'r politics! They're only got up to chate and desave the honest, hard-workin' paple into votin' for nabobs, who don't care a ha'pence for them."

"But, my friend Murphy," began the other, in a soothing voice.

"Yez nadent frind me," quickly retorted the Irishman. "It'll do no good. A burnt child dreads the fire. I'se got enough of politics. So good mornin' till yez."

And with this the "disgusted" elector turned away and marched into the store. The man, half-amused and

half-angry, stood for a moment looking in after Murphy, and then moved on, saying to himself as he did so—

“Confound the fellow ! He isn’t so green as I thought him. Well, we must fill his place with some Green Islander of a later importation. There are plenty of them about ready to be caught. I guess we can spare him.”

And with this consolation, the party leader went on his way. Doubtless he found it an easy matter to fill the gap left by Murphy’s breach from the traces ; for, we say it more in sorrow than in levity, “all the fools are not dead yet.”



THE LOVE-LETTER.

ANDY CAVENDER was a sad trifler in his way. There was scarcely a maiden in the village to whom he had not made love at one time or another, and all as a pleasant piece of pastime; not seeming to understand that maiden's hearts were tender things, and liable to be hurt in the handling.

Many tears had he caused to flow from beautiful eyes, yet, if he knew of the fact, it did not appear to give him serious concern. There was always a smile on his lip and a light word on his tongue.

At last, however, Andy's heart received an impression. The image of a fair young girl rested upon it; not as of old, like the image in a speculum, to pass with the object, but like the sun-fixed image of the Daguerreotype. Strange fact! the fickle, light-hearted Andy Cavender in love; really and truly in love.

There had come to Woodland, to pass a few months during the warm summer-time, a city maiden, whose charms were too potent for the village flirt. She came, he saw, and was conquered. It was soon plain to every one that it was all over with Andy Cavender. Kate—the lively, witty, darling Kate Archer had subdued him with her charms, though all unconscious herself of the conquest she had made.

But others saw what she perceived not, and looked on curious for the issue.

“What do you think of this, Jenny?” said Kate Archer, one day, to the young friend with whom she was spending

her summer in the country, and she laughed as she spoke, at the same time holding up a letter.

"News from home?" remarked Jenny, smiling.

"Oh dear, no! It's a love-letter."

"What!"

"A real righty love-letter, and, as they say, nothing else. Oh dear! To think that I should have made a conquest already!"

"A love-letter, Kate? Well, here is an adventure, sure enough! Whose heart have you broken?"

"You shall see and hear for yourself," replied the laughing girl. Then, as she unfolded the letter, she put on a grave countenance, and, opening the pages to the eyes of her friend, read aloud—

"MY DEAR MISS ARCHER:—Will you permit one who, from the moment he saw you, became an ardent admirer, to lay his heart at your feet? Until you appeared in our quiet village, no maiden had passed before me who had power to win my love. But, from the moment I saw you, I no longer had control over my affections. They flew to you like a bird to its mate. You cannot but have observed, in all our recent meetings, that I regarded you with more than a common interest, and I have permitted myself to believe that you read the language of my eyes, and understood its meaning. You did not turn from me; you did not look coldly on me. Have I erred in believing that your heart responded to the warm emotions of my own? I trust not. If it be so, then am I of all men most miserable. I will wait, with trembling and impatient hope, your answer to this.

"Tenderly and faithfully yours,

"ANDREW CAVENDER."

"Now, Jenny, dear, what do you think of that?" said Kate, gayly, as she folded up her letter. "Haven't I made a real conquest?"

"Andy Cavender! Well, that beats every thing!"

"None of your country maidens for him," laughed Kate. "He must have a city belle."

"Country maidens! He's made love to every good-looking girl within ten miles round."

"He!"

"Yes. There's no counting the hearts he has broken."

"Did he ever make love to you?"

"Oh, certainly," replied Jenny, gayly.

"In real earnest?"

"Ah! now you come to the point. Perhaps you've not heard that Andy is our village flirt?"

"A flirt, indeed! And so I am to be one of his victims. Oh dear!"

"I don't know as to that. I more than half suspect him to be in earnest now. In fact, I've heard from more than one source, that he is desperately in love with you."

"Will he hang himself if I'm inexorable?"

"There's no telling. But what kind of an answer are you going to make to his avowal of love?"

"What shall I say?"

"Oh, that depends on your feelings."

"He's a regular flirt you say?"

"I could name you a dozen girls at least, to whom his attentions have been of a character to make them believe that his designs were serious. Two or three were made very unhappy when he turned from them, like a gay insect, to seek another flower."

"Then he must be punished," said Kate, resolutely; "and be mine the task to lay the smarting lash upon his shoulders. For the man who deliberately trifles with a woman's feelings I have no pity. He has been the cause of pain beyond what it is possible for himself to feel; and, if I can reach his sensibilities in any way, you may be sure that I will do it with a hearty good-will."

"I do not like the thought of giving pain," remarked Jenny, "even to a reptile."

"Pain is salutary in most cases; and will be particularly so in this, I hope. He will have some idea of how it feels, as the woman said, when she rapped her boy over the head with a stick for striking his sister."

It was as Jenny supposed, and as we intimated in the beginning; Andy Cavender was really and truly over head and ears in love with Kate Archer, and every line

of his amatory epistle was from his heart. Two or three letters were written and destroyed before he produced one exactly to his mind, and this he finally despatched in full confidence that, as it came from his heart, it must reach the heart of the lovely maiden.

Two days went by, and no answer was received by the enamoured swain. He began to feel anxious. On the third day, a neat little perfumed envelop came into his hands, which on opening, he found to contain a pink, perfumed, satin-edged sheet of note-paper, on which were a few lines most delicately written. They were as follows:—

“MY DEAR SIR:—Your letter, containing a most flattering avowal of regard for one who is comparatively a stranger, has been received. Its effect I will not attempt to describe; nor will I, at this time, venture to put in written language what I feel. To-morrow evening I will spend at Mrs. T——’s. May I hope to see you there?”

“Yours, &c.,

KATE.”

Andy was in ecstasies at this answer to his epistle. Its meaning to him was as plain as if Kate had said, “Dear Andrew, my heart is yours.”

On the next evening, he repaired to Mrs. T——’s, trembling with fond anticipation. On entering the parlour he found but a single person therein, and that a young lady named Herbert, to whom he had formerly paid very marked attentions. Aware that she had been made unhappy by his fickleness, not to call it by a harsher name, the meeting rather threw a damper over his feelings. But Andy had his share of coolness and self-possession, and although it cost him a considerable effort, he managed to introduce topics of conversation and to talk pretty freely, although the talking was nearly all on his own side, Miss Herbert maintaining a cold reserve, and answering entirely in monosyllables.

For about a quarter of an hour, Andy endured the ordeal, wondering why this particular young lady should happen to be alone in the parlour of Mrs. T——, and wondering still more why Miss Archer did not make her

appearance. Just as he began to feel a little excited and uneasy, the door opened, and in walked another young maiden whom he had reason to remember—a Miss Mary Harper. She was also one of his old flames. She appeared surprised at seeing him, and greeted him with coldness. Andy tried to say some sprightly things to Miss Harper; but he was far from being in as good condition as at first. The effort to entertain Miss Herbert had somewhat exhausted his reservoir of spirits, and his attempts to draw further thereon were not very successful. The two young ladies drew together on the sofa, and maintained a mutual reserve toward Andy that soon began to be painfully embarrassing.

“What does all this mean?” Andy had just asked himself, for he was beginning to feel puzzled, when the sound of light feet along the passage was again heard, and, the door opening, his eyes rested upon the form of Caroline Gray, to whom he had once paid his addresses. Very particular reasons had Andy Cavender for not wishing to meet Caroline on that particular occasion; for he had committed himself to her more directly than to any other young lady in Woodland, having, on one occasion, actually written and sent to her a love-letter. The precise contents of that epistle he did not remember; but often, when he thought of it, he had doubts as to the extent to which he had committed himself therein, that were not very comfortable.

Soon another and another entered, and, strange to say, each was an old flame, until there were present not less than six fair, rebuking spirits. Silent, Andy sat in the midst of these—silent, because the pressure on his feelings had become insufferably great—for nearly a quarter of an hour. It was a social party of a most novel character, and one that he has never forgotten.

About the time that Andy's feelings were in as uncomfortable a state as could well be imagined, and he was beginning to wish himself at the North Pole, Kate Archer and her friend Jenny entered the room slowly, the former with an open letter in her hand, upon which the eyes of both were resting.

In an instant, it flashed upon Andy Cavender that he

was to be victimised by the city belle. No sooner had this thought crossed his mind than, rising abruptly, he bowed to his fair tormentors, saying—

“Excuse me, ladies.” And beat a hasty retreat.

But ere he had passed beyond the street door, there reached him a gush of merry laughter from the musical throat of Kate, in which other voices mingled.

On the next day, he received a letter directed in a delicate hand. It inclosed the one he had written to Kate, and accompanying it was a note in these words—

“There is, it is presumed, a mistake in the direction of this. It was probably meant for Caroline Gray, Mary Harper, Nancy Herbert, or Jenny Green. In order that it may receive its proper destination, it is returned to the writer.”

The village flirt was a changed man after that. He had played with edged tools until he cut himself, and the wound, in healing, left an ugly scar. Poor Andy Cavender! All this happened years ago, and he is a bachelor still, notwithstanding several subsequent attempts to make a favourable impression on the hearts of certain pretty maidens. The story of his punishment at Mrs. T——’s flew over the village in a few hours, and after that no fair denizen of Woodland for a moment thought of regarding any attention from Andy Cavender as more than a piece of idle pastime; and, on the few occasions that he ventured to talk of love, the merry witches laughed him in the face.

H A S T Y M A R R I A G E .

IN the select circle of refinement and intelligence in which she moved, none were more highly esteemed than Jane Power. She was beautiful without affectation or pride, amiable without weakness, and well educated without being pedantic. If she had any fault, it was, that she had too warm and too confiding a heart. Innocent and sincere herself, she never suspected others of guile or duplicity. She had, indeed, heard of wicked men and women, but could not imagine that any she met, with graceful manners, and smiling countenances, could be such. There was an excellent but not brilliant young man, named Jason, who was sincerely attached to her, and for whom she had begun to entertain sentiments rather warmer than those of common friendship. But just as a sincere esteem was beginning to ripen into pure affection, another actor of more imposing exterior came upon the scene. His name was Fells. Nothing was known of him in the circle, where he appeared as a perfect stranger, and received all the attention and courtesy due to a stranger who comes introduced by respectable individuals.

Here is a grand and fatal error in our social habits and regulations. Let me illustrate it in the present instance. Who then was Mr. Fells? The son of a respectable merchant in Charleston, who had been ruined by his vices and extravagance. At his father's death, he inherited the small remnant of a broken fortune, and made his way North, with evil habits confirmed, and principles shaken to the foundation. He had two prominent vices, drinking and gaming, with others not to be mentioned here. These soon made deep inroads upon his slender means, and, as a necessary resource, he entered a hardware store in this city, as a clerk, at a salary of five hundred dollars a year. With this, and partial habits of forced economy, he was

enabled to keep up a very fair appearance. Having a good education, and being well acquainted with business, from having early in life entered his father's counting-room, he soon, by hiding carefully his evil propensities, gained the confidence of his employers, who at the end of the second year, proposed a limited partnership. He was thus enabled to take that position in society which he desired. He was handsome, intelligent, of pleasing address, and *in business*—of course he could get into almost any society, for there are too few social restrictions founded upon principle.

Parents too generally allow their daughters to choose their own company, and to visit where they please. And those who make parties rarely inquire into the moral character of the stranger they are asked by an acquaintance to invite. I need not say that this is all wrong. The many unhappy marriages that take place in the very best families, in our city, every year, painfully attest this fact. This evening, a father may look with proud affection upon his beautiful and accomplished daughter, as she glides smiling from his presence to grace an evening party, and to-morrow, unknown to him, her young and confiding heart may tremble with a pleased agitation as it treasures up the looks, the words, and smiles, of one who has neither character nor principle. A few weeks pass, and the mischief is done. Perhaps the young man calls in company with a friend of the family, about this time, and spends an evening. The father and mother, culpably unsuspecting, receive their visitors with smiles and compliments, and in a half hour "leave the young people alone." Is it any wonder that in this way attachments are formed which a whole lifetime of wrong and misery cannot break? It is in vain, when matters begin to wear a more serious aspect, for the father to discover that a young man addressing his daughter is not what he could wish. Her heart is now all too deeply interested in the matter. His business was to have guarded the tender blossom, which God had given him, from the contact of evil. It is too late now. The "poison of love" has passed through every vein, and there is but one physician that can allay the burning fever. If he does not consent to yield up, even with tears, his dear child to the arms of one who

will soon esteem her as of little worth, he will, in all probability, find her deserting her home and long cherished ones for the protection of a stranger. Do not these things happen around us every day? Depend upon it, our social barriers are far too easily passed! There is not enough exclusiveness practised towards the unknown and the unprincipled.

But I must return. Consequent upon the facility with which a young man of pleasing manners and good appearance can get introduced into society, Fells soon gained a pretty extensive acquaintance. He had frequently met Miss Power "in company," but had not yet obtained "an introduction," that cobweb protection against the advances of a perfect stranger. He was acquainted with Jason, her almost constant attendant, and, finding that no offer was tendered of an introduction, told him one day that he should like to visit Miss Power. Jason, who was of a quiet, observing turn of mind, had seen many things in the conduct of Fells which he did not like, and had determined from the first, that through him Jane Power should never make the acquaintance. He evaded a direct reply, by observing that she was a very worthy and intelligent young lady, and immediately changed the subject. But Fells was not to be driven off.

"She is certainly a sweet little creature, and I must know her," said he to Jason.

"She is amiable and good," was the reply.

"By the by, Jason, people say that her father has the gooseberries."

"The what?"

"The gooseberries, man! Why, you're green! The ready rhino, to the tune of sixty thousand."

"I presume her father is in easy circumstances. But what of that?"

"What of that, Jason? Why, do you suppose I am so simple, or that I think you so simple as to care nothing for the wherewithal? No, indeed! I consider myself worth at least twenty thousand dollars, and I must have a wife on equal terms."

"How long is it since you were worth twenty thousand dollars, Mr. Fells?"

"Why, am I not a genteel, well-educated man—and is not every such a man valued low at twenty thousand dollars?"

"You're jesting."

"Indeed I am not jesting, though. And a wife of equal worth I must have."

"I don't exactly understand your mode of reasoning."

"Well, I suppose I must explain then. Any man of business capacity, can earn, as a clerk, at least one thousand dollars a year, which is the annual interest on a permanent capital of twenty thousand dollars. A woman can earn nothing, therefore she should have a capital of twenty thousand to invest, to be on equal terms with her husband. Do you understand that?"

"Perfectly."

"And mean, of course, to practise on so plain a principle."

"I leave all theories and practice of this kind to you, Mr. Fells."

"Of course," said Mr. Fells, with a sneer. And the subject was changed.

More than ever determined was Jason now, to keep, if possible, so dangerous and heartless a man from becoming acquainted with Miss Power. But there are so many ways to gain an introduction into our social circles, that Fells very soon was charming the ear of the unsuspecting girl, and winning her good opinion to himself. Jason observed this with pain, but did not feel at liberty, under all the circumstances, to whisper to Miss Power the danger she was in. A stronger motive for standing aloof, was founded in pride. If such a one as Fells could win the affections of Miss Power, she was unworthy his regard. So soon as this thought flashed across his mind, he withdrew himself almost entirely from her company, and left her free to feel the witchery in every word and tone of the specious and fascinating stranger.

Fells now became a frequent visitor at her father's house, and her constant attendant. Partner in the respectable firm of Gains, Fells & Co., he was received by the thrifty father of Miss Power with smiles of approba-

tion, and sooner than he could have expected, he was the accepted lover of the sweetest girl he had ever met.

A believer in the old adage, that a "bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," Fells proposed an early day for the marriage, and in a very brief space was the husband of Miss Power.

Little change could be seen in Fells for two or three years, by any one, except his poor wife, who too early discovered that she had given a treasure into the keeping of one who could form no appreciation of its value,—that the fascinating glitter of his manners but the more effectually concealed the roughness, and coldness, and want of principle within. Her simple mind was at first shocked by the small regard he evinced for truth, and the want of feeling often shown towards the suffering. But he was not harsh to her, only cold, and often indifferent. How her poor heart sometimes ached, when it turned back upon itself, after vainly seeking from him some word, some look, some tone of pure and deep affection!

Not long after their marriage, the fingers of Fells began to itch to handle some of the many dollars Mr. Power was reputed to possess. As a limited partner in his present firm, money accumulated with him too slowly, and he longed to pass thousands to the account of profit, where he now passed hundreds.

Before the end of the first year, he so won upon the confidence of his father-in-law, as to induce him to offer an equal partnership in his own house, which was doing a heavy business in the jobbing line. He of course at once dissolved existing connections, and entered upon a business of which he knew nothing. In a short time, Mr. Power, as Fells was an active man, and of good address insisted that he should take the position of principal salesman. In this capacity he was eminently successful, for he could sell more goods, by one-half, than the oldest and most experienced salesman in the house. Young western and southern merchants, who were fond of frolicking and good company, soon got to know the house of Power and Fells, and were sure to go there, in the fall and spring, to buy their goods. And why? because the junior partner always attended them in their wine drinking, and other parties of pleasure. He always had a free ticket for

them at the theatre, and could go with them to every place of amusement and dissipation to which their loose morals might lead them.*

Securing almost the entire custom of the pleasure-loving western and southern merchants, he of necessity often made bad sales, and at the end of the second year, the house, instead of showing any real profit, was considerably injured by the failure of customers. In making up a statement, and ascertaining exactly the position of affairs, Mr. Power's eyes were suddenly opened to the real state of the case. His mercantile sagacity should have taught him as much before, but it required a heavy loss to open his eyes. He now remembered, with pain, that Mr. Fells kept too constantly the company of just such men as those who had cheated the house. A suspicion, on the instant flashing across his mind, caused him to turn to his son-in-law's account, when he was alarmed to find, that, although he was living with his wife at his house, at no expense but what it took for clothing, he had actually drawn four thousand dollars in a twelve-month! Deeply pained at this discovery, and remembering all at once that Fells had not been regular in his attendance at the store, and that he generally kept very late hours at night, rarely coming in before one, two, and three, in the morning, he had a sickening consciousness that something was vitally wrong—something threatening to destroy his peace of mind, and that of his daughter, for ever.

Many painful reflections crowding upon his mind, he felt unfitted for business, and retired to his home at an early hour. Seeing now with opened eyes, he was shocked to perceive the wan, pale countenance of his daughter, and the look of anxious concern which she directed towards him, as he came in at an unusual hour.

* I must not be understood as attempting to insinuate anything against the morals of western and southern merchants, as a body. Among them, as among all classes of the community, are those who are fond of dissipation, when they come to the large eastern cities, where an open door invites them in almost every street. It is well known, that this disposition to seek pleasure, falsely so called, by some of the younger country merchants, is encouraged by a few eastern houses, some members of which are always at hand to introduce them into all the mysteries of city vice and dissipation

"What is the matter, father?" said his child, whose heart had long feared, with an excited and trembling fear, some strange calamity.

"Nothing, daughter."

"But something must be the matter, father, for you look pale, and strangely concerned; and you are not used to come home at this time."

"I do not feel altogether well, this afternoon, child, and that has brought me home."

Jane looked at him for some moments doubtingly, and then turned away with a deep-drawn sigh, to attend to a bright little fellow about two years old, who just at that moment came running to her with some childish request.

That night was one of sleepless anxiety, and deep thought to Mr. Power. He had no counsellor, but his own breast; for one who had ever been a faithful adviser, and an unfailing stay when he would have fallen under the pressure of calamity, had been laid in her grave for more than a year. After weighing matters calmly, and solemnly, for many hours, he came to the resolution, of expostulating first, and then proposing a dissolution of partnership, if his reasonable desires were not complied with. It was near day when Mr. Fells came in, and he was not up, of course, at the regular breakfast hour. Mr. Power thought he had never seen his daughter's countenance look so haggard and care-worn as it did while she sat alone with him that morning at the breakfast table.

It was nearly ten o'clock, when his son-in-law came to the store, and immediately Mr. Power requested an interview with him in the private apartment of the counting-room. Here he stated to him his fears for the ultimate result of his present course of conduct, and his entire disapprobation of it.

At first, Fells was disposed to take matters in anger but when his father-in-law told him, with an air of stern determination, such as he had never known him to assume, that, unless he complied with his wishes, an immediate dissolution must take place, he appeared humbled, and promised amendment.

For a short time his course of conduct was apparently all that could be desired. And the cheek and eye of his poor wife were brighter, and her tone happier, than they

had been for months. They had two sweet children, one a boy over two years old, and the other a girl who had only numbered a few months. In these he seemed to take a new delight. But alas! all this was of but short duration. He had commenced the downward course, and who could arrest him in his career to ruin?

At the end of three months, he was as irregular in his habits as ever; but Mr. Power allowed none of the responsibilities of the business to rest upon him, and kept a careful eye upon his drafts for money. By this means he restrained him in a great measure from running into excesses.

But he had become the slave to two o'ermastering vices—drinking and gaming!—and for the last, no trifling supplies of money would answer. Mr. Power watched with too jealous an eye, over the cash account, to allow him to make further unnecessary inroads there, and the limited supply he could draw, was in every way insufficient to meet his debts of honour (!!) But money he did raise, and how? Why, he made a note of five thousand dollars in the name of the firm, at four months, obtained an endorser, and opened with it a new account in a bank that readily discounted it. This amount did not last him long, as he had gotten of late more deeply entangled in the gambler's difficulties, having fallen in with some of those soulless gentry called blacklegs. The whole five thousand were gone in a month. He now waited upon a firm that was in the habit of exchanging notes with them, and stated that they wanted an accommodation of ten thousand dollars, and wished to pass obligations. A note for the amount was obtained, and as readily passed through bank. Intoxicated with so abundant a supply of money, he risked it prodigally at the gaming table, and soon found that he was turning his last dollar again. A momentary pang of remorse shot through his mind as he reflected upon the result of all this—but, resolved still to have money, he sat down to devise new schemes for procuring it.

He had formed an acquaintance with a villain who had no conscience, and to him he confided a statement of his dilemma. They put their heads together, and after suggesting many things, at last resolved, that Fells should

make ten notes, each for two thousand dollars, in the name of Power and Fells, and that he should pass them away to several note-shavers. The plan was executed, and as the credit of the firm was among the first in the city, the notes were caught up with avidity by the private money-lenders, who rarely got hold of anything in those times so "strong."

He had now drawn upon the firm to the amount of thirty-five thousand dollars, and from his knowledge of the amount of real capital employed, he knew well that a suspension would be the consequence. But he cared but little now. Secure in the last dividend he would probably get of the profits, real or imaginary, of the business, he cared to remain no longer, and accordingly started off secretly for the south, under an assumed name, leaving his wife and children without a word, and with scarcely a thought—and old Mr. Power to bear soon the shock of a falling house.

All that poor Mrs. Fells suffered when she found that her idolized husband was gradually growing indifferent to her—that even the smiles of their sweet babes could not win him to his home—is only written in heaven. My imagination cannot picture it, nor my pen describe it. All the period of three years, from the time she was married, until her husband went away, I will pass over, though it was to her a period of intense mental suffering, and bring her before the reader on the night of her watching, until the stars grew dim—"and yet he came not."

After tea on that evening, she sat with her babe in her arms, until nearly ten o'clock, musing sadly upon the strange conduct of her husband. At eleven, she threw herself upon the bed, as was her wont, without taking off her clothes, and slept until two, when she awoke as usual, to listen and wait for her husband. The night was dark and cloudy, and as it was late in autumn, the wind moaned drearily along the deserted street, giving a sadder feeling to her already overburdened heart. How anxiously did she listen to the sound of every footstep as it approached, and with what cheerless disappointment did she notice its passing by! Three o'clock, and yet he had not come.—The minutes fled away, and filled up the

measure of another hour, and still she sat, listening, at the window. And when the dim light of the morning came coldly in, and paled the flickering rays of the taper, she was still a sleepless watcher. Who can calculate the extent, who can fathom the depths of a woman's ever-during affection?

Agitation and alarm were visible in her countenance when Mr. Power came down from his room in the morning.

"What is the matter, Jane?"

"Mr. Fells has not been at home all night. Where *can* he be?"

"I am sure I cannot tell, Jane. But don't be alarmed; he will be here, I suppose, this morning. He does not keep as regular hours as he should."

"Oh, father, my heart feels as if it would break! I have watched for him all night long, in hope and fear, and yet he is away! He never comes home now until three or four o'clock, and then often so much intoxicated, that he will curse and abuse me if I say a word to him." And the poor wife covered her face with her hands, and wept until the tears trickled through her thin white fingers, and fell in large drops upon the floor.

Her father folded her in his arms, and endeavoured, silently, to calm the excitement of her feelings. Many thoughts rushed through his mind, and bitterly then did he repent his early carelessness in leaving his daughter an easy prey to any plausible villain who might chance to come along. He felt then and there the necessity of social restrictions, but felt it too late.

The hours rolled heavily away for Jane Fells that day, for each recurring one she hoped would bring back her absent husband. At two o'clock, when Mr. Power came home to dinner, he had not been to the store; and now, in considerable alarm, her father went out to seek him, he knew not whither. After vainly searching and inquiring in all directions, he was informed by a friend that he saw him take his seat in the western stage at six o'clock that morning in company with a noted gambler. With this information he hurried home in a state of mind inconceivably painful. He thought it best, knowing his daughter's

character, to tell her the truth, and also to impart at once to her his suspicion of the cause.

"Have you found him, father?" were her eager words, as he entered.

"No, my child; and I am afraid will not soon.

"Oh, what do you mean? He is not dead, father? Tell me at once—O, tell me—I can bear it, father—don't fear me." Her wild eye, pale cheek, and look of eager and alarmed expectation, showed how little prepared she was to bear any such startling announcement.

"No, Jane, he is not dead."

"Thank God!" was her quick ejaculation—"thank God! he is not dead." And she sobbed and laughed for a few moments, hysterically.

Recovering herself in a brief space, she said in renewed alarm, "Then, father, where is he?"

"Sit down, my child, and I will tell you all I know. Strengthen your heart to bear the burden, Jane, for it is one that will have to be borne,—not thrown aside. I have lately discovered that your husband has drawn out of the business, in cash, during the last year, about five thousand dollars. He had no use for all this money, if he did not visit the gaming table, where, I fear much, he has squandered this large sum. After searching for him in vain all day, Mr.—— told me that he saw him enter the western stage at six o'clock this morning, in company with a noted gambler. Something is wrong, and I much fear that too soon we will hear of that which will make us wish we had never seen or known him."

Eagerly had his daughter looked him in the face while he was speaking, and now, when he paused, she clasped her hands together, and lifting up a countenance of unutterable despair, murmured, "my poor babes," and sunk senseless upon the floor.

Here was the consummation of her worst fears. She had long had strange suspicions that all was not right, and now the dreaded blow had fallen, and fallen with an unexpected force. No wonder that, for a time, she yielded to the shock.

For many weeks Jane Fells did not hold up her head, and for most of that time it was feared she would never again look out upon the world—that she would never pass

the door-stone, until borne out by the mourners. And Mr. Power was in a state of mind, that was hardly rational. The calm, business-like energy that had heretofore characterized him, yielded to a nervous, agitated, undecided manner. The fact of his partner having left an apparently good business under such singular circumstances, led many to suppose that all was not right; and, consequently, the credit of the house was shaken, in a manner that rendered the situation of Mr. Power really embarrassing. To make things worse, one of the dashing customers of the junior partner failed, and the house of Power and Fells held his notes to the amount of fifteen thousand dollars. The loss was total.

To fill up the measure of embarrassment, a notice was received from one of the banks of a note due in a few days of ten thousand dollars. No such note appearing upon the bill-book, Mr. Power went to the bank, and soon understood, for himself, that the note had been made by his son-in-law. Knowing that the only way to completely overwhelm the sinking credit of the house, would be to let the note lay over, he, with some difficulty, raised the money and cancelled the fictitious obligation.

Scarcely was the evidence of his partner's guilt fairly out of bank, when ten notices from different banks were left, each calling for the payment of two thousand dollars in two weeks;—so utterly regardless, it seems, had been Mr. Fells, as to the dates and time of the notes he had, to all intents and purposes, forged. The bill-book of the firm showed, of course, no memorandum of these obligations.

In the case of Mr. Power, as in the case of thousands of others, troubles came not singly. Ere the due day of these notes rolled around, notice came of three suspensions in St. Louis, each of which heavily involved his house. But it is needless for me to linger in detail. It was soon noised abroad that the house of Power and Fells had failed, and the rumour was not without foundation. One of the old school of merchants, Mr. Power's mercantile integrity was dear to him as the apple of his eye; and now that it was tainted by suspicion, his head sunk upon his bosom, never to rise again. He gave up everything into the hands of trustees,—goods, accounts,

real estate and all, and retired with his daughter and her children, to a little farm a few miles from the city, which belonged to his wife, and which had been made over to his daughter so soon as her mother had died. He had one satisfaction, in the final settlement of his business, and that was, that it paid one hundred cents in the dollar. After this result was known, he sunk into a gloomy, listless state, and in one year, was laid at rest in the grave.

When Mrs. Fells turned away from the grave of her father, and with her two children went back to her home, it was in sadness and gloom. Even though, to her, the heavens had long been enveloped in blackness, there had been still shining out, from amid the thick clouds and darkness, one bright star; but now that star had gone down for ever. Until within three years, she had known none of the trials and afflictions of life. Alas! how many had been crowded upon her in that brief time? Father and mother both laid in the grave, and a husband lost to all honour and shame.

When she sat down in her desolate dwelling with her babes, and the darkness of night fell gradually around them, she felt forsaken of all—even of her God: for she had not learned to put her trust in him who is a friend to the widow and the fatherless. For more than an hour had she yielded up thus to an overmastering despondency, since the night-fall, and still she sat buried in gloom, and almost despair, without a single friend to whisper a word of comfort, when she was surprised by a loud knock at the door. As the servant opened to the demand, Mrs. Fells was startled by the sound of her own name, in the tones of a well-known voice, and in the next moment her husband stood before her—her husband, but oh, how changed! Pale and emaciated, he was but the shadow of his former self. His clothes were worn and poor, and betokened extreme poverty and degradation. In his face were the marks of dissipation, and the harsh lines of unholy thoughts and evil passions. But Jane saw none of these,—the being who was dearer to her than all the world, stood before her, and she only saw him as such. She had ever loved him with a fervent and unwavering love, even though he had almost broken her heart; and now, that he had come back to her again, after a long

and heart-sickening absence, she opened wide her arms to receive him.

"My dear husband!" was all she could say, as she sprang towards him, and fell almost senseless in his arms.

"Jane—can you, will you, forgive me?"

"All—all, dear husband!"

Such a reception he had not expected. Selfish in his own feelings, he knew nothing of the deep wells of affection that often lie hid in a woman's heart. Forced by sickness and want, for he had run rapidly his downward career, to return home, or die, he had approached the spot where his wife had retired with anxious reluctance. Reproaches he looked for, but to meet in their place forgiveness and love, melted his heart; and in tears — tears of sincere repentance — he confessed his errors, and promised to lead a new life.

Hope soon revived in the breast of his stricken-hearted wife, for Mr. Fells, confined to the house by sickness, and having neither inclination nor opportunity, under such circumstances, for the indulgence of any of his evil habits, showed so much regard for, and interest in, his wife and children, and so much sorrow for his former conduct, that she fondly hoped that all would be well again.

As he gradually recovered under his wife's untiring care, Mr. Fell began to feel a returning desire to mingle again in society. There had been, with him, no cultivation of the moral faculties, and but little of the intellectual, and he, therefore, had neither the attractions of mind to win him to solitude, nor the stern admonitions of principle to keep him from again throwing aside as worthless the peace of her who had received him with open arms when he had no place in which to lay his head.

Strange as it may seem to some, the first time he could walk as far as the city, he came home in a fever of intoxication. Anxiously had his poor wife looked out for him, hour after hour, as the day wore away, hoping and fearing, and sick at heart, with conflicting emotions. She had not suffered so much since the day when it was told her that her husband had forsaken his wife and his babes. As the twilight began to fall, she strained her eyes into the distance with eager anxiety, and at last discerned his well-known form. Her heart throbbed wildly

as she caught the first glimpse of her husband, but she could soon see, as he approached, that all was not right; and when he came up to where she stood, and she saw his condition, she could but just turn and stagger into the house. He was too much under the influence of strong drink to observe his wife's distress, and began talking in great good-humour of the prospect which had suddenly burst upon him, since he had gone into the city, of getting into a good business. A friend had met him, an old friend, and had held out large inducements. All that was required was a small capital; with that, they could soon be as they once were. Mrs. Fells understood the meaning of all this, as well as did her drunken husband. This was but the first intimation of a design, cherished ever since he returned home, to get into his own hands the little property, made over to her by her father. She persuaded him to go to bed, where he was soon snoring in drunken insensibility.

How suddenly were all her hopes scattered, like chaff before the whirlwind! And thus have the hopes of thousands been scattered.

Next morning, Mr. Fells remembered something of the condition in which he had come home the night before, and the distressed manner and look of his wife admonished him that she had but too closely observed it. Although a little angry with himself for his conduct, he felt more angry with his wife for showing her disapproval of it, and put on a cross, offended air. At the breakfast-table, he sat silent, with brow drawn down, and every exhibition of angry feeling. His poor wife, seeing this, felt a double weight upon her heart, and of course, could not assume a cheerful air. He determined, in his own mind, that she put on a cross look to reprove him for what he had done, and he was not going to be thus threatened like a child. Not a word had been spoken during the breakfast hour, until Mr. Fells, in tasting a cup of coffee, found that it had not been sweetened.

"This coffee is as bitter as your looks—Give me some sugar!"—said he, crossly.

As she reached him the sugar, the tears started from the eyes of his wife, and almost blinded her.

"What in the devil are you blubbering about this

morning? One would think you had met with some terrible calamity."

She sealed her lips in silence, for her heart was too full to speak. The blow had fallen too suddenly upon her.

"If you expect me to stay at home," continued he, "you must make home pleasant. I shall not stay here if there are to be clouds and rains all the while."

Even to this Mrs. Fells spoke not a word, and her husband resumed his silent, dogged air.

After breakfast, he went out upon the little farm, and looked to some improvements that were going on. This gave him an opportunity for reflection. It is true that he spent the first hour in blaming his wife for her "crossness," as he called it, but after awhile a spark of feeling kindled in his bosom, and he felt that he was the more criminal of the two.

And Mrs. Fells, what were her thoughts! It was the first time he had done anything, since he had returned, to shake the dear hopes she was cherishing in her bosom, and she could not help showing the deep distress that passed upon her stricken heart. But now that she had painful evidence of the effect the exhibition of such distress had upon her husband, true to the character of a woman, she resolved to hide deep in her bosom the pain, and to meet him even with a smiling face.

Such reflections and resolutions on both sides, of course, made the meeting at dinner-time a pleasanter one. Mr. Fells came to the house, with a feeling of pity for his wife, though with no thought of conciliation on his part, and was of course ready for the salutary effect of her altered look and manner. He was a little reserved at first, but the entire change in his wife soon re-assured him, and he was cheerful and talkative. The effect which this hiding of her feelings had upon her husband, Mrs. Fells thought was an ample reward for the effort.

The allusion which he had made while drunk to an offer to go into business, was not an imaginary one. An individual, to whom, while half-intoxicated, he had been boasting of the fine farm which he owned, had suggested to him the advantage of selling it, and entering into business with him. He stated that he was now clearing so

much every year, and if he could only add a few hundred dollars to his capital, and a partner in the active business of the concern, he could quadruple the profits.

In a day or two, Fells broached the subject to his wife, but she opposed it at once. The farm she said now yielded them a good living, and he was more removed from temptation there than in the city.

Never disposed to argue a point with his wife, and understanding at once that she had no confidence in him, he got terribly angry, and threatened to sell the whole property in spite of her. She made no reply, but firmly resolved that she would never consent to have the property sold.

Foiled in the attempt to convince his wife of the utility of selling the farm, he determined never to give her a kind look or word, until she consented to its disposition. And now commenced the terrible conflict—terrible, did I say? Ay, TERRIBLE to the heart of a suffering wife!

From the rising of the sun to its going down, she knew no kind look, and heard no word from her husband that was not a word of anger or reproach. Even her little children saw and felt the change, and looked fearful and distressed. Often would their father scold and beat them, for no other purpose, it seemed, than to make a cause for angry contention with his wife, to whom they would fly for protection, and who was ever ready to meet even his anger and abuse in their cause. Frequently he would go off to the city, with the avowed purpose of offering the property for sale to the highest bidder;—generally, on such occasions, he would come home intoxicated, and, not unfrequently did Mrs. Fells endure more than hard words.

Worn out at last, and feeling almost regardless of consequences,—Mrs. Fells consented to sell the farm, and suffer her husband to go into business with the proceeds. Her approbation being once gained, little time was lost in disposing of it.

It was a sad day for her, when she left this refuge from the world in her former days of sore distress, and left it for ever. A snug two story house was rented in the city, and here they took up their abode. The farm brought fifteen hundred dollars, and the whole of this was invest-

ed in a grocery store. (The affairs of the person who had proposed to take Fells into business with him, had for some time been in a desperate condition, and had come to a crisis some months previous.)

I will not take the reader along, step by step, in tracing the course of this man down to beggary. It would be but consuming his own time and mine to little purpose. Suffice it to say, that at the end of eighteen months, the grocery store had dwindled down to a grog-shop, with a few kegs and decanters of liquor, a box or two of herrings, and a few trifling things in the window, to make a show. To this grog-shop, Fells was about the best customer. For some months, the income of the shop had been insufficient to support the family, and the deficiency Mrs. Fells made up by taking in plain sewing. He was generally drunk from the middle of the day until night, and during that time, this accomplished and sensitive woman had to stand behind the counter and mix liquors for every worthless drunken vagabond that chose to enter. To this she could never get accustomed, and she did indeed feel her degradation, while thus forced to partake in the sin of the drunkard. Many and many a time did her heart bleed, as she poured out the maddening draught for those she knew were beggaring their families, and drinking confusion to their wives and children. But the end after awhile came to all this. Their rent having remained for some time unpaid, their landlord seized upon their things, and turned them out of their house with little besides the clothes on their backs.

There lived in — street, in a splendid mansion, a lady, who had once been seamstress in the family of Mr. Power. She had married a young man who had been enterprising and thrifty in business, and who had grown rich, during prosperous times, rapidly. His wife, who was a proud, ignorant, and vulgar woman, would have everything on the most splendid scale, — and truly their dwelling showed everything in costly style, if not in all things accordant to a cultivated taste. Beside the mansion of this lady, was a poor hovel of frame work, and only one story high. This was rented by Mr. Fells, and here his needy family retired. Creatures so poor and so abject as these, were not noticed by the purse-proud Mrs.

Conklen, who would have felt that there was contamination in their touch. I merely mention the striking fact of the reverse in the fortunes of these two individuals, and the incident of their being thrown beside each other in their altered fortunes. — Many of my readers can call to mind a similar fact.

Mrs. Fells' two children were still living — one four years old, and the other between two and three. To procure food and raiment for these, was now her chief concern. Persons in her former situation, cannot imagine how they would get along if reduced to abject poverty, with helpless babes dependent on their labour, and not a single friend in the world to help them. But when the trial comes, it must be met, and the difficulties overcome. A few things not taken by the selfish landlord, and which could be spared, were sold, and food enough bought to last them a couple of weeks. This took away from the mind of Mrs. Fells the confusion of immediate want, and she sat down calmly to reflect upon the best course she could pursue. There were no families in the neighbourhood who knew that she could or would do fine sewing, even if they had it to give out. At last she made up her mind to apply at the clothing stores for work. From these she got coarse shirts to make, and received for them eight cents apiece. She could make two of these a day, and sometimes, by working very late, three, besides attending to her family. It was indeed but a small pittance that she thus earned, but it was at least a protection against complete starvation.

The necessity for pinching economy forced her to cut off the remnant of comforts which she had retained — tea, coffee, and milk, except a little for the youngest child, were banished from the table, and the principal meals were made of potatoes and dry bread, with a little meat once a day. There were four of them, one a hearty man, and the provision for all these, was less than twenty-five cents a day. Her brute of a husband would do nothing, except pile lumber occasionally on the wharf, or some such occasional drudgery, merely for the purpose of getting liquor.

There resided opposite to the hovel where they lived a benevolent lady, who had for sometime noticed the move-

ments of Mrs. Fells, but had no idea of her almost entire destitution. She remarked on one occasion that she had not seen Mrs. Fells for several days, and determined to call in and ascertain if anything was the matter.

To her knock at the door, she heard a feeble "come in," and entering, she was pained at heart, to note so many tokens of extreme poverty. The only furniture to be seen was a pine table, a few broken chairs, some kitchen utensils, and a bedstead, upon which were placed a few old quilts to answer for a bed. On these was laid a pale, emaciated form, whose eager eyes looked searchingly into her face, and then wandered away to two little children who had fallen asleep in the middle of the floor.

"I am sorry to find you sick, ma'am," said her visiter. "Are you very ill?"

"I have not been able to hold up my head this whole day, nor to sit up in my bed for two or three."

"What can I do for you?"

"I want nothing, ma'am, but my poor children have had but little to eat for two days," said Mrs. Fells, bursting into tears.

"For two days? Dreadful! Poor things!" and the good-hearted woman, lifted them up from the floor, gently, thus arousing them from slumber. The youngest began to moan piteously, the oldest to cry in silence, both looking imploringly towards their sick mother—and each asking for "bread." The mother turned her head away, and sobbed aloud.

"Come with me, and I will give you some bread," said the lady to them.

The children looked at her a moment, and turned again to their mother, moaning and crying as before.

The lady left the house, and quickly returned with nourishing food, and soon had the delight of seeing the little ones eagerly satisfying the cravings of hunger.

A servant had been dispatched for one of the physicians for the poor, who happening to be in, came round immediately. He bled his patient, and gave her medicines, and the kind lady who had been a friend in her extremity, prepared for her, with her own hand, nourishing and cooling drinks, and provided a sufficiency of food for her children. She also sent her a bed, and made it up for

ner with her own hands. Every morning, while she remained sick, she made a servant go over and clean up her little room, and see that she had a good breakfast; and she always looked in herself, two or three times during the day, to see how her patient and her children were doing.

When Mrs. Fells got better, this kind woman gave her more profitable work herself, and made interest for her in the neighbourhood. In a little time she had as much fine sewing as she could do, for which she obtained a good price; but with her most active industry she could earn but a poor support for herself and family.

A kind friend in her extremity was, to Mrs. Fells, like bread to the hungry. It had been a long, long time since any one had seemed to care for her. All the friends of her better days had fallen away, like leaves from the sapless branches in autumn. But now a stranger had come to her humble abode, and was to her a friend and a parent. She had never, in all her keen suffering, lifted her heart to God, for she was not taught early to pray. But when she remembered the gentle, unobtrusive, and heart-felt kindness of this friend, she lifted up, almost involuntarily, her thoughts, and asked of God, her soul melted into tears, to shower upon her his choicest blessings. A poet has beautifully said, that "Dear unto God are the prayers of the poor"—For my part, I would rather have had the prayer of that poor mother—the first that ever went up from her heart—than the prayers of all christendom.

At first, many kind neighbours joined to make her situation comfortable, but finding that a part of whatever they did went to support a drunken, lazy husband, nearly all relaxed in their charitable actions; and although for a while Mrs. Fells got along, with small assistance, quite comfortably, yet in a few months, she was nearly forgotten by all save one.

From some cause it became necessary for her to move away from her neighbourhood, and beyond the reach of her kind friend, who saw nothing more of her for many years. What she suffered in that time is only known to Him whose eyes are abroad upon all the earth, and who comforteth the poor when no man careth for them.

It was a cold morning in winter, when a ragged boy about twelve years old, knocked at the door, and, on being admitted, said that Mrs. Fells had sent a request that she would come and see her before she died.

"Mrs. Fells, did you say? Certainly, my boy—Where does she live?"

"In —— street."

"Whereabouts in —— street?"

"I will go with you, ma'am."

In a few minutes she was ready to attend the boy. When she arrived at the house, she was conducted up an old rickety stair-case, and far back in an old building, where, on a comfortless bed, in a room with no furniture but a couple of chairs, and a broken table, lay the sick and dying woman.

"God bless you, for coming!" said she, in a faint voice. She was evidently near her last moments, and sinking rapidly.

"Can I do anything for you?" said the kind lady.

"Yes, one thing, and it is for this I have sent for you. My children! I could not part with them while I lived; but there is a relation of my father's who never cared to look after me, and I could not go to him. I want you to go to him with little Mary, after I am dead, and ask him, from me, to take her into his family. My dying request he cannot pass by lightly. If he will not think it too much trouble, I should like him to look after Charles."

At this moment her husband entered with a minister. The scene which followed — the dying scene — beggars description. Fells was just drunk enough to be a perfect fool. The minister was evidently much annoyed by his familiar manner; for he talked and bustled about with an air of great importance. The dying woman turned her eyes, upon the man of God as he came in, with an eager and anxious look. He took his seat by her side in silence, and for some moments not a word was spoken.

"Hadn't you better pray with her, sir? she is sinking very fast," said her husband, in a tone of drunken sorrow, sobbing aloud as he spoke.

Under the circumstances, nothing better could be done, and the minister kneeling by the bedside, poured out his soul in prayer for the dying woman. When he arose up,

Fells went to a closet, and after searching about for some time, produced an old hymn-book, tattered and torn, and handing it to the minister, said—

“Perhaps you would like to sing, sir.”

The minister took the book in silence, and then turning to the sick woman, commenced talking to her in a low tone.

* * * * *

For more than an hour had the minister talked and prayed with her, and now she began to fail rapidly. He suggested that she should receive the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of the Saviour.

“O, sir, I am unworthy.”

“But no one is worthy.”

“O, sir, I cannot partake of the sacred symbols. To me that sacrament has presented an act so hallowed, that I never could feel like approaching—I fear to eat unworthily.”

“You cannot eat unworthily, if you are sincere. Do not make the ceremony greater than the Lord of the ceremony. If you can approach Christ and be accepted, surely you can approach his table.”

At the word sacrament, Mr. Fells was off in a moment to a store for some wine, and on returning, had got a piece of hard bread from the closet. He stood for a few moments at the foot of the bed, where the minister could not see him, with a bottle containing some wine in one hand, and the bread in the other, enforcing the minister's arguments by sundry threatening looks, and whispered curses. At this dreadful sight, Mrs. Fells closed her eyes, but could not shut it out from her imagination. The minister ceased speaking—and Fells taking advantage of the pause, said—

“Here is the wine, sir, get ready, and she SHALL take it.”

The poor woman turned her dying eyes upon the minister, and murmured,

“I will take it, sir.”

The minister never broke sacred bread under more solemn emotions. Kneeling beside the bed where lay one of the same family, of which his God was the God and

Father, he lifted up, with tearful eyes, his heart, and prayed, that God would seal the peace of his dying servant.

He then placed the consecrated bread upon her lips, and poured for her the blood of the New Covenant ;—and, even while she drank of the cup, her spirit passed away—to eat of the bread of life, and to drink the new wine in the kingdom of her Father.

Thus ends the sad history of this poor victim of a hasty and injudicious marriage. The lesson needs no words of mine to enforce it. As to the dying scene, that is true to the letter. I had it from the lips of her own son, upon whose young mind it made a strong and painful impression. The drunken father died soon after in the **almshouse**.

[illegible]



THE APRIL FOOL.

"HADN'T we the fun with old Mr. Bender, Tom!"

"Hadn't we!" returned the lad, thus addressed. "Oh, but wasn't he mad!"

Thus spoke two boys together, on returning from school at dinner time, on the first day of April. Their mother, overhearing their words, said—

"What about Mr. Bender, boys?"

"Oh, we had such fun with him, mother, as we went to school this morning," replied Tom.

"And he was so mad," said Harry, the brother of Tom.

"Why did he get angry with you?" inquired the mother.

"We made such a fool of him," was answered.

"Of old Mr. Bender?"

"Yes, indeed. Tom tore from a fence a part of a show-bill, on which was printed 'Great Excitement,' and stole up behind Mr. Bender and pinned it fast to his coat. Then hadn't we the fun!"

"And didn't he get mad! All the boys pointed at him, and called him 'April Fool;' and the men laughed. Oh! it was such fun!"

The mother of the boys did not smile at this, but looked very serious.

"I am sorry," said she, "that you did this, my boys. It was wrong."

"Oh, but it was only for fun, mother. To-day is the first of April, you know, and he needn't have got so angry about it. It only made the people laugh at him the more. But, he is such a cross old fellow."

"My children," said the mother, "let me tell you something that happened to-day."

The little boys became serious, and came up close to their mother and listened.

"You know," said she, "that Mrs. Judkins has been sick all winter?"

"Yes, ma'am," was answered.

"And that she is poor?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, her Andrew, who is no older than you, Henry, had to be taken from school and put to work in a printing-office, where he has been receiving a dollar and a quarter a week. Yesterday the little fellow heard that Mr. Bender wanted an office lad, and that he would pay one that suited him two dollars a week. The situation would, besides yielding him more money, be much easier, and he would have time and opportunity to improve his mind.

"So Andrew told his mother about it, and she agreed with him that it was best to call upon Mr. Bender, who had known his father, and befriended him while living on more than one occasion.

"'I'm sure he will take me,' said the eager boy, as he left home, 'and oh, how glad I shall be to get away from the printing-office!'

"A little while before nine o'clock, Andrew stepped around to the office of Mr. Bender, which was not far from where he worked. He opened the door and went in with a hopeful yet trembling heart. Mr. Bender sat in his great arm chair, with a newspaper in his hand. Looking up as the door turned on its hinges, he fixed an angry look upon the boy, and said in a sharp, quick voice—

"'What do you want? ha!'

"Poor Andrew's hopes were dashed to the ground by this reception. He stammered out—

"'Do you want a boy, sir?'

"'No! Clear out, you little rascal!' replied the old man, in a rough, excited voice.

"The lad turned away, without a word more, and went back to the printing-office. But, his heart was almost broken by the rude repulse and disappointment. Now, my boys, can you tell why Mr. Bender, who is, in the main, a kind-hearted man, repulsed Andrew Judkin so harshly?"

"He was angry about something, I suppose," said Thomas.

"Can you guess what that something was?"

"Was it because we made him an April fool?"

"Most probably," returned the mother. "You say he was very angry?"

"Oh yes. He was as mad as he could be, and shook his fist at us."

"You had your fun, as you call it," said the mother of the boys, "but poor Andrew Judkin has, in all probability, lost a good place in consequence. He will hardly venture back again to the office of Mr. Bender."

"I don't think," remarked one of the lads, "that it was very manly in Mr. Bender to get into a passion just because we made him an April fool. We played tricks on other men; but they only laughed at us, and so we had fun all around."

"All men are not alike," was replied to this. "Some are sensitive on one point, and some on another. Few persons can bear ridicule, though some have the power to conceal its effects, while others have not. Mr. Bender has, naturally, a quick, irritable temper, and is, besides, sensitive to ridicule. Such being the case, it was scarcely possible for him not to get angry when two little boys were so rude as to make sport of him in the street. No doubt he felt mortified afterward for having thus lost his self-control; but ere there had been time enough for this change in his feelings to occur, poor Andrew came with his petition, and received an angry repulse."

"I'm sorry," said Harry, appearing troubled, "that I made fun of Mr. Bender. I'm sure I wouldn't have done so, if I'd thought he was going to get so very angry. But, if we did wrong, I don't think he did right in treating Andrew as he did. Andrew didn't make fun of him."

"All injustice is wrong, my son," replied the mother, "and, therefore, Mr. Bender did wrong. Still, the wrong was done while he was, as it were, not himself, and not really conscious of what he was doing. You were to blame for wantonly insulting him, and thus producing the state of mind from which he acted. Yours was the first aggression, and therefore you are quite as much responsi-

ble as Mr. Bender for the wrong done to poor Andrew Judkin."

The boys looked sober. Their mother added—

"Never, my children, seek pleasure at the expense of another. Think, before you make sport of any one, how you would feel if subject to a like annoyance. There is a Golden Rule by which your actions should ever be governed—'As ye would that men would do unto you, do ye even so to them.' Remember this, hereafter, and set a guard upon yourselves, lest you break it. There are sources enough of pleasure in the world, without seeking it in a trespass upon the rights of others."

COLD-WATER WEDDING.

"HARRY SOMERS is to be married to-night."

"Yes."

"And is going to get a sweet, good girl, for a wife. Ellen Lewis is a prize worth gaining."

"She certainly is. But, I'm afraid she's about getting the worst of the bargain."

"How strange a remark for you to make! — you who know Harry Somers so well, and have always seemed to esteem him so highly."

"So I have; and so I still do. But then he is, in my opinion, a little bit of the fool. And Ellen, you know, is a girl of sense."

"I never saw anything about Harry to lead me to such a conclusion."

"Well, maybe the term *fool* is a little too strong. But what I meant to convey, was, that he has many queer notions of his own, which I am sure Ellen, with her plain good sense, never will be able to tolerate."

"I never discovered anything singular in his opinions and actions," the friend replied, "and I have seen a good deal of him."

"You have noticed, I presume, that when he takes an idea into his head, there is no beating it out of him."

"If the idea be a true one, I think it would be hard work to make him give it up, certainly."

"No, but true or false — it is all the same with him. And then he will take up notions of his own, and stick to them, though he become the laughing-stock of the whole world."

"Name one of these notions."

"That I can do very easily. There is to be no wine at his wedding, to-night."

"Indeed!"

"It's as true as I live. He set his head, I am told, that

not a drop of wine should be served at his wedding; and Ellen and her family had to give in to him, though it was done with great reluctance."

"That is, certainly, a strange notion for him."

"Aint it?"

"I suppose he has joined the tee-totallers?"

"No, I believe not—It all arises from some whim of his own, I presume. — No doubt from a foolish desire to appear singular."

"Henry Somers never acts from such motives. He is a man of too much good sense."

"Then, pray, what other motive could he have?"

"He might have many good ones; and I have not the least doubt that, in this matter, he is governed by pure and just principles."

"Principles! What in the name of common sense has wine at a wedding to do with principle?"

"It may have much to do with principle."

"I cannot see how."

"Wait patiently, and you will, no doubt, be fully satisfied."

"No doubt. But do you intend going?"

"O, certainly."

"I don't think I shall go."

"Why not?"

"It will be a dull, silly affair, I suppose."

"Don't you believe it."

"I do, then. Why, every one will be so affected with a sense of the ridiculousness of the farce played off, that all true rational pleasure will be lost. If I were to go, I could not look you or any one else in the face without laughing, to save my life. A wedding, and no wine! Ridiculous!"

"I cannot see anything so very ridiculous in it, Mudie; nor will you, I am very much inclined to think, if you venture to go."

"Well, perhaps I may, if it's only to enjoy a good hearty laugh after it's all over."

The two young men then parted. Their names were Mudie and Lee.

"I really have no heart to go into company any more," remarked Adeline Whiteman, to her sister Eleanor, sitting

down with a dispirited air, as she paused in the work of dressing herself for Ellen Lewis's wedding.

"Why not, sister?" asked Eleanor.

"Because, as you know, brother always will drink too much when he gets into company—and it makes me feel wretched. Last week at Mrs. Wheeler's party, you remember how silly he made himself! I was so hurt and mortified that I could have sunk into the floor."

"Indeed I do remember it. All my pleasure for the evening was spoiled. And so was cousin Mary's. I tried once or twice to sing and play, and thus add my mite to the general enjoyment. But I could not do it with any heart, and was conscious that my performances were failures. Indeed, I heard a gentleman remark in a low tone to his partner:

"How indifferently Eleanor plays to-night!"

"I felt that what he said was just. But I could not help being hurt, for the cause of my failure was one so painful as to break down my spirits."

"And I," resumed her sister—"tried my best to dance with some life. But in vain. My feelings were so depressed that my very body lost its buoyancy, and my feet felt like lead. I had at last to go and sit down, and refuse to dance any more, though frequently solicited."

"Why," asked Eleanor, "could not wine and all kinds of intoxicating drinks be banished from social parties? They are not, really, needed; and at this time, when so many have acquired a slavish love of drink, it seems to me not only wrong to put a temptation in their way, but really unkind to a company, met for social enjoyment, thus to endanger their pleasant intercourse. All know, that if one becomes partially intoxicated, it dampens the feelings of the rest. And especially, if that one have a wife, a mother, or a sister present."

"You remember, of course, the unpleasant, and, indeed, painful occurrence that took place last winter at Mrs. Wolcott's."

"Indeed, I do! Poor Jane Morven! How my heart did ache for her! I was sitting by her when she first noticed that her husband had been drinking too much. He came up and asked me to dance with him. I observed that he had a strange look and manner, and felt an instant disin

clination to go upon the floor, and therefore politely excused myself. He insisted, however, in a rude way; and I, to prevent observation, consented. I turned towards his wife as I arose. Her face was pale as ashes! I instantly guessed the cause, which soon became too plainly apparent, even to me. Mr. Morven could not go through a single figure, and acted so badly that he broke up the cotillion in a few minutes. As soon as this occurred, I returned and took my place beside his wife."

"O, Eleanor, is it not dreadful?" she said, the tears dimming her eyes, as she turned her pale, sad face, towards me.

"I did not know what to reply, but merely responded—

"It is, indeed, Jane.' And then there followed a long, and, to both of us, a painfully embarrassing silence. This was broken by the appearance of her husband, who, still more intoxicated, came up, and standing before us, went on with a parcel of drivelling nonsense for about five minutes, that disgusted me as much as it must have pained and mortified his poor wife. Just then, a friend of his who saw his condition, considerably drew him aside, and prevailed on him to go home. Jane was quietly informed that he was about leaving, and as quietly withdrew, much to the relief of many, who saw, and deeply pitied her situation."

"If there had been neither wine nor brandy tendered to their guests by Mr. and Mrs. Wolcott, on that evening," Adeline remarked, "how much of exquisite suffering to at least one heart might have been saved! For more than three months, Mr. Morven, conscious of his weakness, had steadily persevered in refraining from the use of liquor. The consequence was, that Jane had begun to feel a degree of confidence and hope that she had not experienced for a long time. The temptation offered her husband at that party was too strong, and he fell; and fell, alas! into a perfect abandonment of himself, for many weeks, to the insane pleasures of intoxication.

"It sometimes seems, Adeline,' she said to me one day, during this period, leaning her head upon my shoulder, and giving way to tears, 'that my heart must break! O, it is a terrible affliction for one so young as I, and all un-

fitted to bear the lot of misery too surely in reversion for me!"

"I could only weep with her, for I could give no word of comfort. I felt that there was something so hopeless about her lot, that it would be like mockery to offer vain words of encouragement. But I must not sit here, giving way to desponding thoughts. To the wedding we must go."

"Yes. — Our families are too intimate, for us to think of not going. And Ellen is one of my dearest friends. I am glad she is about to do so well. — Henry Somers is a young man of sterling principles."

"Brother Edward will go, of course"

"O, yes, of course. He told me to-day, that he should be there."

"I do hope he will have prudence enough not to drink too much. But I tremble when I think of it. He so soon forgets himself."

The two young ladies then proceeded to dress for the wedding, with heavy hearts. At the appointed time, accompanied by their brother, they entered Mr. Lewis's brilliantly lighted parlours, already filled with a gay company assembled to witness the marriage ceremony. For half an hour or so, a light and lively conversation ran round the room, which was broken by the entrance of the parties to be united. The minister met them as they came in, and immediately the impressive ceremony began, and soon progressed to its termination. All was then for a few moments salutes and congratulations, with a moving to and fro, and, a mingling of all together in one mass of happy confusion. Then order was gradually and spontaneously restored, and servants entered with the bride's cake. For a few moments, Adeline and Eleanor had forgotten their fears in the delight they experienced from seeing their young friend so happy. The sight of the waiters and refreshments recalled them to a painful recollection of the danger they so much dreaded. Both felt a sickening sensation pass over them. But they rallied their feelings with an effort.

"I see Mr. and Mrs. Morven here," Adeline remarked to her sister.

"Yes," was the reply. "And I suppose Jane's poor heart is trembling."

"No doubt." Then after a pause—"That is not wine, surely, that the servants are passing around?"

"O, yes. Whoever heard of anything but wine following the bride's cake?"

"If it is wine, it is white, and contained in lemonade-glasses!"

"Lemonade-glasses? Sure enough! But it cannot possibly be lemonade?"

"Yes, I expect so, and most earnestly do I hope that it is! How much more refreshing as a beverage than wine!"

"To me it is. But we will soon see. For here it comes."

As Eleanor said this, the servant paused before her, and she lifted a glass from the waiter which he bore, and placed it to her lips.

"All right, sister," she said, in a cheerful tone.

"But isn't it a strange idea?" remarked Adeline.

"It's a very good idea."

"So it is. But I wonder if wine will not be served."

"No doubt it will. But how happy I should be, and how happy poor Jane Morven would be, if nothing stronger than lemonade were offered to the company!"

"This is very refreshing, Mr. Mudie," remarked a lady by the side of that young gentleman, as she sipped, with an air of satisfaction, her cool lemonade, perfectly unconscious of the omission to serve wine that had been allowed to take place.

"Very refreshing, indeed!" responded the young man, raising his glass to his lips, involuntarily, and sipping, in turn, the pleasant beverage. "On a warm evening like this, nothing is more grateful to the taste."

"Why, look how lively and cheerful Adeline Whiteman and her sister have grown all at once," said his companion, directing Mr. Mudie's attention towards the young ladies to whom she had alluded. "They have seemed dull ever since they came into the room."

"So I remarked. But a gleam of sunshine appears suddenly to have fallen upon them."

"At the last party where I met them," resumed the

lady—"they seemed to enjoy themselves but little. Both sing and play exquisitely, and dance with almost unequalled grace and spirit; but of late, in parties, they have not seemed themselves. Their playing has not been so skillful; and only in plaintive and touching airs, have they for some time exhibited their musical powers. In these, they sometimes, especially when they sing together, move yo almost to tears."

"It is strange, is it not?" the young man said, musingly

"It certainly is. Something is, no doubt, wrong at home. But as to its nature, I have no idea."

"Does it not seem a little strange that they should have brightened up so suddenly?"

"It does, indeed. There, do you see that sweet, happy smile, how it melts over, and makes radiant every feature of Eleanor's lovely face, as she replies to some question put to her by Mr. Lewis, who has just come up, and is passing, no doubt, merely the simple compliments of the evening."

"How like the smile that used to play there a few months ago; but of late, strangely banished from its lovely resting place! What can be the cause of the change that has taken place in both of them during the past year?"

"I have sometimes thought," the lady replied, "that their brother is becoming dissipated. He almost always drinks too much on an occasion like this, and sometimes makes himself very foolish."

"Yes, I have noticed this several times, and it may be that this has something to do with the change that has taken place in them. It must mortify and pain them exceedingly."

"So I should think. You remember how much he was out of the way a few weeks ago at your house."

"Yes, very well. So much so that I was not only mortified at his conduct, but so offended with him, as almost to resolve never again to invite him to the house. Were it not for his interesting sisters, I am sure that I would not."

"I observed, on that occasion," remarked the lady, with whom Mudie was conversing, "that the spirits of the sisters seemed to droop, as he became more and more

excited with drink, and that their eyes often followed him about with a sad expression."

"How I do pity them!" Mudie said, in an earnest sympathising tone. "But they need have no fears to-night."

"Why not, Mr. Mudie?"

"Didn't you know that this was to be a kind of cold-water wedding?" returned the young man with a broad smile.

"No," in a tone of surprise.

"It is, then."

"A cold-water wedding! I don't know that I exactly understand you, Mr. Mudie."

"A wedding at which there is to be nothing stronger than cold-water to drink, or lemonade, which is the same thing. But isn't it a queer notion?"

"It is certainly something new to me; but the idea seems most excellent, seeing that the pleasure of an evening like this is so often marred by the departure of some weak one from true sobriety. Especially to two young ladies situated as Adeline and Eleanor Whiteman are, it is an act of true charity."

"No doubt it is. But I presume it will be a dull affair. Without a little wine, now and then, to bring up the spirits, a social party must be a laboured affair."

"I cannot see how that need be, Mr. Mudie. Now, I for one, never drink wine, and I could point you to a dozen other ladies in the room who do not. Neither of us, I believe, is at all famed for dullness in company. I know you will give me credit, at least, for not sitting all the evening with my hands in my lap, and simpering out a feeble, 'yes sir,' and 'no sir,' to all that is said to me."

"O, yes, I will give you credit for being lively enough. But every one hasn't your flow of spirits. I, for instance, always feel my tongue and my ideas, too, locked up, until the wine begins to circulate."

"Excuse me for saying, Mr. Mudie, that I do not perceive but that your ideas flow very readily, and that I can see no fault in your expression of them."

"I don't know how it may seem to you, madam, but I am, myself, conscious of a feeling of constraint, that I should not experience, if I had taken a glass or two of wine. I am not only at a loss for subjects of conversa-

tion, but do not find language so readily, nor experience that ease and self-possession that I do under the gentle excitement of a little generous wine."

"You can bear to hear the truth, can you not, Mr. Mudie?" his companion said, in a graver tone, looking him with a kind, but more serious expression, in the face.

"From you, I can, madam."

"Are you sure?"

"O, yes, I am sure of that. Speak plainly, and to the point."

"That is a privilege that we married ladies sometimes take, especially after we have attained some little age on one side, with it corresponding experience."

"Don't be afraid. I can bear the truth."

"Very well. I have met you in company a good many times within the last two years; and have observed you about as carefully as I observe most young men whom I thus meet—and that is pretty closely. Now, the result of this is, that I like your company and conversation at the beginning of a party, but never towards the end."

"Why not, Mrs. ——?"

"The reason is easily given. Before the generous wine takes effect, you are, to me, an intelligent and rational young man."

"But Mrs. ——, I never drink too much wine," the young man said, in surprise.

"Perhaps not. But there is, certainly, to me, a very great change in you, always, towards the conclusion of a social party."

"You must really be mistaken, madam."

"Persons of my age and habits of observation are rarely mistaken in a matter like this, Mr. Mudie."

"You surprise and pain me greatly, Mrs. ——. Can what you say be really true, or only the effect of your own imagination?"

"Trust, me, my dear sir, that all I say is too true. More than once has my attention been called to the fact by others, thus corroborating what I thought I saw myself. But you are not alone in this, my young friend. I could name to you several of your acquaintances, who, while they think that they are making themselves peculiarly interesting in a party, are rendering themselves in

the eyes of not a few, extremely foolish. Their suavity of manners, their brilliant sayings, indeed, the whole tenor of all that appertains to them while under the excitement of 'generous wine,' are sometimes seen and heard with pain or disgust."

"Indeed, indeed, Mrs. —, you draw too strong a picture."

"Perhaps I do. But could I draw such a picture without something of an original? Let me, however, refer to Mrs. —, here, who has been listening to our conversation."

The lady referred to, a mutual acquaintance said, in answer to the appeal,

"Like you, Mrs. —, I have too frequently observed, that after a few glasses of wine at a party, and, perhaps, a little brandy, too, from the side-board, our young men become much livelier: but lose a measure of their intelligence, and of course, their interest for me. They talk much more freely, but the superabundance is mere froth, that conceals the body and soul of genuine rationality. They can bow and smile, and gracefully incline their bodies into attitudes, but——"

"Say no more—say no more, if you please!" Mr. Mudie ejaculated, interrupting the lady who had been referred to; "or, I shall be so mortified that I cannot enjoy this cold-water wedding at all. My feelings are already almost down to zero, and with no wine to bring them up, I fear my company will be anything but interesting and agreeable."

"We shall all enjoy ourselves, very much, I have not the least doubt; and you, among the rest," was the reply. "As happy a face to look upon as Adeline Whiteman's is now, and as gay a partner as her sister when in fine spirits, will do more to put life into my young friend, Mr. Mudie, than a whole bottle of wine. Am I not right?"

"I am sure I do not know, I have never tried the experiment."

"You will have a chance to try this evening, or I'm mistaken, for the spirits of the sisters I have just alluded to, are certainly rising fast. The reason of this happy change,

have now not the least doubt is to be found in the fact that they have learned that no wine is to be served to-

night. You cannot tell, Mr. Mudie, how pleased I feel about this, now that its necessary happy results become apparent to my mind."

"I must say, that, like you, I feel pleasure at the thought that two such amiable beings are made happy. Most willingly will I give up the wine for their sakes. But what could have induced our friend Somers to take such a position, involving himself, as he most certainly will, in ridicule?"

"Principle, I suppose. He has no doubt been made to feel sensibly the evil of introducing intoxicating drinks in companies where there may be some who will be tempted to use it immoderately."

"He is certainly a bold man to take such a stand."

"He is, I believe, an independent man—that is, a man, who, when he is once convinced that a certain course of action is right, will pursue it steadily and fearlessly. I wish there were more such."

"Will Miss Whiteman favour us with a song?" said Mr. Lewis, the bride's father, about half an hour after, to Eleanor.

"With pleasure," that young lady replied, with one of her happiest smiles, for her heart felt as light as a feather. There had been no wine yet.

Handed up to the piano by Mr. Lewis, she took her seat there, and after turning over a few music leaves, selected a piece that her eye lit upon unexpectedly. Then running her fingers over the keys of the instrument, for a few moments, she commenced in a clear, musical voice, and with much expression, the song—

"Water for me, bright water for me,
And wine for the tremulous debauchee."

Its effect upon the company was almost electrical, exhilarating their feelings, and putting each one in the best possible humour with himself, and all around him. Its repetition was called for, when it was sung with renewed spirit.

"You seem quite happy to-night, Eleanor," remarked a lady who sat by her side, some ten minutes after, while each held in her hand a saucer of strawberries and cream.

"And I do feel happy," was the reply. "This is one of the most pleasant parties I have attended for a long time. Every one is so full of life and true enjoyment."

"So it appears to me. And I have already been wondering to myself about the reason. We have all met in company, frequently, but never before, it seems to me, in such excellent spirits. I really believe, Eleanor, that it is, because you and Adeline are so full of life and enjoyment."

"O, no. That is a mere idea of your own."

"It may be. But so I have thought."

"Will you dance, Miss Whiteman?" young Mudie said, coming up at that moment, and offering his arm.

"With pleasure," was Eleanor's response, and the two passed to the centre of the room, to take their places in a cotillion. Mr. Lee, the friend of Mudie, came up with Adeline at the same moment, making the set complete. The two girls were in fine spirits, and danced with exquisite grace. Their partners were never before so struck with their loveliness.

Thus the festivities of the evening progressed, and continued with an uninterrupted flow of spirits. It was a feast of reason, and a flow of soul; rather than a flow of wine without reason.

"I don't know when I have enjoyed myself better," was the remark of almost every one, the brother of Adeline and Eleanor among the rest.

"Well, Mr. Mudie, how do you feel now?" asked the lady with whom he had been conversing during the early part of the evening.

"Very pleasant, indeed," was the reply.

"You didn't need wine to keep up, I believe."

"No, indeed, I have scarcely thought of wine since."

"And yet, I have rarely seen you in better spirits."

"It was because I had such a pleasant companion during a greater part of the time."

"Eleanor Whiteman?"

"Yes."

"You know the reason — at least, the presumed one — why, she has been in such good spirits?"

"O, yes. And I am so glad there has been no wine; and I

hope I may never see another drop at a party, as long as I live."

"Really, you have become quite a convert to the cold-water system!"

"How could I help it, when it has worked to-night so admirably? Did you observe Mr. Morven, how much he seemed to enjoy himself?"

"I did. And his wife too. How cruel it would have been, had they placed, as some of our temperance folks say, a devil to his lips, to steal away his brains?"

"It certainly would. For months he has been trying to reform himself, and has not, in that time, tasted a drop of wine or spirits. It would be extremely dangerous for him to do so. He has, on this account, declined, of late, attending parties; for he dislikes to refuse wine, because it attracts attention to him, and reminds the company of his weakness. Being related to Henry Somers, he could not stay away to-night. How distressed his poor wife must have felt, in anticipation of the danger that would be run!"

"I have no doubt of it. Indeed, I could not help noticing that she had an unquiet look during the first part of the evening, all of which soon passed away, and she enjoyed herself very much. What you have just said, gives me a clue to explain something that you could not understand."

"What was that?"

"The reason why Mr. Somers would not consent to have any wine at his wedding."

"True — true. I see what you are going to say. It was, no doubt, on his relative's account."

"No doubt. And I only wish every one else was as considerate of others. If they were, there would be very little wine served round to promiscuous companies, I am very certain; for there are but few assemblages now, where there may not be some one to whom it would be a temptation — some reformed inebriate, who might fall away, and never after be reclaimed."

"That consideration is certainly a very serious and important one, and, it now seems to me, should never be lost sight of," was Mr. Mudie's reply.

"You seemed very much pleased, last evening," Adeline Whiteman said to her brother, as they sat alone upon the sofa, on the next morning.

"I certainly was, sister—more than I have been for long time. And you, too, were brighter and happier than usual. I heard several remark that both you and Eleanor were the very life of the company. How is this? You have been particularly dull in society, of late?"

"Have I?" Adeline replied, her manner becoming at once embarrassed.

"You certainly have. But why do you colour and look confused, sister?"

"You say that you enjoyed yourself very much, last night, Edward?" his sister resumed, after a few moments laying her hand upon his arm, and looking him earnestly in the face.

"I certainly did, Adeline."

"And yet there was no wine there, brother," she added, still gazing into his face.

"What do you mean, Adeline!" was his instant response, somewhat sternly made.

"I only said that there was no wine there—no artificial excitement."

"But why did you say it to *me*?" in a severe tone.

"Do not be angry, Edward, with a sister who loves you tenderly, and whose very love makes her perception of danger tenfold more acute."

"You speak in riddles, Adeline! Come at once, and distinctly to the point. Of what danger do you speak?"

"Of the danger that lies in the wine cup, Edward. You may be unconscious of it, but I have too frequently seen you under its influence in company, not to fear and tremble for you."

Half conscious of his own weakness, yet fully assured that no one had a suspicion that he was in danger, Edward Whiteman was taken by surprise at this. Both irritated and mortified, he did not know what reply to make. He felt angry with Adeline, because she had perceived, what he supposed no one suspected; and was yet, at the same time, conscious that he had no right to be angry with his sister, but with himself. He, therefore, would not trust himself to speak, but sat for a few moments in agitated

irresolution, and then suddenly rose up and left the room, and the house.

Poor Adeline was, of course, exceedingly distressed at this. The effect upon her brother's mind, of what she had said, she could not, of course, truly imagine. But her busy fears suggested the worst and most painful result. He was, evidently, angry at what she had said, and a brother's anger she felt it to be hard to bear,—still harder to bear, was the thought that she had, by her imprudence, driven him, in all probability, to speedy ruin.

"What troubles you now, Adeline?" her mother asked, coming into the room where she still sat, and finding her in tears.

"I have been talking to Edward, ma; and he has got angry and left the house," was her reply.

"What were you talking to him about?"

"I am afraid you will all blame me, but I did it for the best. You know that I have several times mentioned to you, that at parties he often drinks too much wine, so as to make himself the subject of remark, and that we have all felt troubled about him on this account."

"Well?"

"I hinted, distantly, at this, just now, when he insisted on my speaking out plainly;—I did so, gently warning him, that he was in danger."

"And he got angry?"

"Yes, and left the house without making any reply, from which I could gather his true feelings."

"This is what troubles you?"

"O, yes, ma, I feel deeply distressed about it. I had only his good in view; but I tremble lest my well-meant effort will be productive of harm. What, if he should suddenly throw himself away!" and a new gush of tears attested the agitation of her feelings.

"Do not give yourself unnecessary pain, Adeline," her mother said, in an encouraging tone. "No harm, be assured, will grow out of what you have said. All of us, instead of blaming, must feel greatly obliged to you for relieving us of a very unpleasant duty, that should have been performed months ago."

"Are you then, satisfied, that no harm to Edward, will

grow out of what I have said?" Adeline asked, in a calmer tone.

"I apprehend no danger at all," was the mother's reply. "I think that I understand Edward's character well enough to be assured that he will not only thank you for warning him of danger, but will flee from it in future. His feelings are easily roused, but when they subside, he reasons calmly, and is fixed in his resolutions."

"How greatly you have relieved my heart," the daughter said. "Still, I shall be very unhappy, until he returns, and we are reconciled."

It was about three hours after, that a gentle rap at Adeline's chamber-door, roused her from a deep and troubled reverie. As she opened it, a low, and somewhat sad voice, asked,

"Are you alone, sister?"

"Yes, Edward, come in," she replied, quickly, and her brother entered, and closed the door quietly, after him. Kissing the cheek of his sister, that was paler than usual, he said, as he drew his arm affectionately around her waist—

"I want to talk with you for a little while, Adeline."

"I will hear you with pleasure, Edward. But first, do you forgive me for what I said this morning?"

"Forgive you, Adeline! O, yes, and thank you a thousand times! It is upon that subject that I wish to converse with you."

A momentary silence passed, and then the young man resumed—

"For some months past, I have noticed, and so have others, that neither you nor Eleanor were so cheerful in company as formerly. May I ask the reason?"

"As you expect, and I can only give a true reason, Edward, I must answer, that it was because we were troubled on your account."

"Why, then, were you in so much better spirits last night?"

"Because you drank no wine, there."

"Then, was it simply my drinking of wine that troubled you?"

"O, no, Edward, not that. It was the effect produced on you by the wine."

"What was that effect? speak frankly."

"The effect has been, at nearly every party, for the last six months, except the one last night, that you have become elated and foolish, if I must so speak, to such a degree, that you were noticed by the company. How, then, could we be cheerful when such was your condition—or even while looking forward to it, at the beginning of a social evening, with dread."

For some time after Adeline ceased speaking, her brother sat in thoughtful silence,—then he said—

"Since your unexpected remark this morning, which half-offended, while it pained me exceedingly, I have been endeavouring to recall the past with as much vividness as possible. I had already become conscious of a growing fondness for wine, but could not believe that this had been perceived by others, much less by yourself, or any of the family. And yet, although I had noticed a change in you and Eleanor for some time back when in company, I never could bring myself to inquire the reason, for fear that it had something to do with this very weakness. What you said this morning, satisfied me that my vague and scarcely acknowledged suspicions were but too true. An hour's serious thought convinced me that I had but one safe course to pursue. The reluctance with which I gained my own consent to adopt that course, convinced me of my danger, and confirmed my resolution to adopt it. I have determined, hereafter, to abstain totally, on all occasions, from the use of wine, or strong drinks. This I am convinced is the only safe way for me."

"O, brother! What a load you have removed from my heart!" Adeline said, leaning her head upon his shoulder, while tears of joy fell slowly over her cheeks. "How happy I shall be! And how happy we all shall be!"

"And I, too, shall be far happier, and prepared to join in purer social delights, than heretofore. I laughed, heartily, at the idea of Henry Somers's cold-water wedding. But I shall never cease to remember it with pleasure, I tried hard, when I learned, beforehand, his intention, to ridicule him out of the idea; but the more I said, the more resolute he seemed to grow."

"What reason did he give you?" Adeline asked.

"None at all; although he said his reasons were so

good that no argument, persuasion, or form of ridicule, could change him."

"Is it not a little strange, that Mr. Lewis acceded to his wishes?"

"It is. But, then, Henry told him that if he were not willing to do so, he must insist upon having no wedding party at all. Of the two dilemmas, Mr. Lewis chose the former."

"What do you think was his reason, Edward?"

"I have no doubt that it was on Mr. Morven's account, and, perhaps, on my own, also, as you say I have been too much excited of late in company. Of course, he would not say so to me, but some such reason must have influenced him, I am sure, for he is ever regardful of others in all he does."

"We shall have to give a party to the bride," the sister remarked, after a brief silence.

"Of course," Edward responded.

"A cold-water party?"

"I dislike, above all things, to be singular, Adeline. Still, I should be in favour of excluding everything stronger than lemonade. We have had a good example set us, and have partaken largely of its benefits,—shall we not follow, and thus dispense good to others?"

"I have but one opinion, and one feeling in the matter, Edward, and they are altogether in favour of excluding wine and brandy."

"How will father and mother feel about it?"

"They will warmly coincide with us, I know."

"Then let it be a cold-water party."

"With all my heart."

"How much this party reminds me of the wedding party," remarked Mr. Mudie, to Mrs. —, on the evening when company assembled at Mr. Whiteman's, in honour of the new-married couple.

"In what respect?" asked Mrs. —.

"O, in the life and enjoyment that pervade the whole company. There is a sphere of rational and confidential social intercourse prevailing here to an extent not always experienced."

"I have felt the same at other parties."

"So have I. But it is rarely that we find all in so

large an assemblage as this, ready to enter into the general joy. Upon some heart will rest a burden, and upon some countenance a shadow of gloom."

"These, however, will be dissipated to a great extent by the light and joy that is diffused around, if there be not some present cause of pain or uneasiness."

"No such cause should be permitted to exist in a social party."

"So think I. Now, it is because all causes that could possibly affect unpleasantly any one invited to this party, have been removed by those who have given it, that all seem to be so happy."

"How has this been done?" asked the young man.

"Particularly in the exclusion of everything that could intoxicate. This, you are aware, I suppose, is a cold-water party."

"Sure enough! There has been no wine served. Really, I had not observed it!"

"Then I presume you have not felt the need of it to get up a social feeling within your own bosom?"

"O, no, indeed! Every one is so full of enjoyment—every one so social, that I have become at once affected by the general delight."

"Do you think if wine had been circulated, that Eleanor Whiteman whom I saw leaning upon your arm a few minutes ago, the personification of beauty and joyousness, would have been so happy as she is?"

"O, no. I am sure she would not."

"The heat, and warmth of social life, transfused around, and felt by all who approach one like her, must give a thousand times purer and freer spirit of social intercourse, than all the wine that ever was or ever will be served. There is nothing, Mr. Mudie, like the wine of a happy spirit, to exhilarate a company."

"I feel sensibly the force of your remark," the young man replied. "I have attended many, very many parties in my time, where wine has been poured out like water, and I have taken wine freely at these assemblages with the rest; but never, I am sure, have I enjoyed myself so much as I have to-night. I have seen more boisterous mirth—more excess of joyfulness, but nothing of the

pure delight, freely and fully expressed, that I have seen here."

"There is, trust me, my young friend, a very great difference in purely rational pleasure, called into activity by warm social affections, and that species of insane enjoyment which depends upon artificial excitement."

"I believe you are perfectly right, Mrs. —. Facts have already proved to me the truth of the position you took at the wedding. But, tell me as a friend, and in confidence, whether—But stay, can I confide in you? And are you willing to be my adviser?"

"You may confide in me as a friend, Mr. Mudie—and as far as I am capable of advising you, I will do so with pleasure."

"Thank you, with all my heart. And now, to begin—Do you know whether Eleanor is engaged?"

"I believe she is not. But why?"

"Would it be hard for you to guess?" Mudie asked with a meaning look.

"Perhaps not. But I like every one to tell plainly and honestly his own story, and then I shall be sure not to misunderstand dark allusions. So speak out plainly."

"I will."

"Then I shall know what to say."

"At Henry Somers's wedding, I saw her in a new light. Before, there had been about her a distance, a seeming coldness, and a reserve, that chilled me, and kept me at a distance. But on that evening, she seemed so suddenly changed into a joyous creature—became suddenly so frank, so cheerful, so full of spirit and beauty, that my heart was drawn towards her irresistibly. To-night, she is even more enchanting. See, now, with what exquisite grace she moves through that cotillion! Did you ever see a sweeter, or happier countenance?"

"I fully appreciate all you say, Mr. Mudie. There are few sweeter girls than Eleanor and her sister Adeline."

"Of that, I am now fully persuaded. And you believe that her affections are not interested?"

"I have reason to believe they are not."

"Do you think I might venture to address her?"

"Ah, now you are coming to the point."

"Well. Now I have come to the point frankly, I hope you will give me a frank answer."

"Certainly I will. You might venture to address her if you were to do one thing."

"What is that?"

"If you were to join the temperance society," Mrs. ——— replied, smiling.

"You are sporting with me, while I am serious," the young man said, somewhat gravely.

"Not so much as you might, perhaps, think, Mr. Mudie. Certain I am, that if Eleanor Whiteman were to see you drink wine at a party, or any other liquor, that would intoxicate, all hope for you, in that quarter, would be cut off."

"That would be arbitrary and unreasonable."

"Not so much so, as at the first impression you might be inclined to think. The dangerous position in which she has perceived her own brother to be placed, a brother whom she has loved, and in whom, no doubt, she has reposed great confidence, will naturally direct her attention to the same habit in others, that has overcome him. The consequence will be, a natural unwillingness to permit her affections to go out towards a young man whom she sees inclined to drink. Though she may respect, and esteem, nay, love him, she will hardly consent to bestow her hand upon him, while the example of her own brother is before her eyes. That which in a brother is so distressing, must be ten times more so in a husband."

"But, Mrs. ———, I do not drink to excess, as her brother too frequently does."

"If I, Mr. Mudie, as I told you on a former occasion, could note a very apparent effect of wine upon you, even while in the company of ladies; would not her quick perceptions, rendered, as they must be, painfully acute, detect it much more readily, if she felt a personal interest in you? Certainly they would! You cannot, then, blame her. If she objected to you, because you used wine and strong drinks, habitually, there would be, in her objection, as I see it, nothing arbitrary or unreasonable."

"Perhaps not," the young man said, musingly.

"But do you think no other serious objection would exist?" he asked, after a few moments' silence.

"I cannot say positively, of course."

"O, no, of course not. But then, as far as you are able to judge, can you encourage me to make advances."

"I certainly can. And what is more, know of no young man more likely to succeed."

"Then I must make the trial, for I believe she has made quite a serious impression on my heart."

"Remember the cold-water, though," Mrs. — said, with an arch smile.

"O, yes. I'll remember," was the reply.

"You look serious, Mr. Mudie," Adeline remarked, as, leaning upon the arm of his friend, Mr. Lee, she paused before the young man.

"Do I, indeed! Well, that ought not to be, when you and your sister, and all your company, are so happy."

"A very wise remark," was the laughing reply. "But where is Eleanor? I must send her to bring back your fugitive spirits. She has life enough in her this evening for two or three. O, here she is!"—as Eleanor came up at the moment—"Come, sis!—Here is Mr. Mudie, looking quite sombre. That will never do. Can't you impart to him a portion of your own joyous feelings?"

As Eleanor approached, while her sister was speaking, her cheeks glowing, and her eyes dancing in light, she appeared to young Mudie the loveliest being he had ever looked upon. The deepening blush that overspread her face at Adeline's playful remark, was observed, and made his bosom thrill with deeper emotion than had yet trembled over the chords of affection.

A momentary and slight embarrassment was experienced by both Mudie and Eleanor; but it quickly subsided, and he offered her his arm with a playful word in reply to what Adeline had said. They were soon lost to observation in the crowd.

"Henry Somers's will not be the last cold-water wedding, I am inclined to think," Mrs. — remarked, with a smile, to a lady near her, as the young couple mingled with their gay companions in the promenade.

She was right. About six months after, the large parlours of Mr. Whiteman were crowded with a bril-

liant company, the central point of attraction in which were three lovely brides. Adeline and Eleanor, looking happier and more beautiful than ever, and also cousin Mary, mentioned far back, as having had all her pleasure spoiled at Mrs. Wheeler's party, by the conduct of Edward. Adeline had become the wife of Mr. Lee, Eleanor of Mr. Mudie, and cousin Mary had yielded up her heart with joy to Edward Whiteman. It was, too, another cold-water wedding; and there was not one present who would have tasted wine had it been offered.

A few days afterwards, Mr. Mudie met Henry Somers.

"I must again offer you my congratulations, Mudie," the latter said, smiling and grasping his hand.

"And I must take this opportunity to thank you for the sweet wife I have obtained."

"Thank me!" Somers said, in surprise.

"Yes, you. You remember your cold-water wedding?"

"O, yes," the other replied, laughing.

"Well, it was because you had resolution enough to act right on that occasion, that I must thank you for my wife."

"How so?"

"I had met her frequently before, but was not attracted. She seemed cold and spiritless. But on that evening, she was remarkably changed. It seemed as if a ray of spiritual sunshine had suddenly gleamed upon her mind. I was at once interested, and that interest soon grew into affection. The cause of so remarkable a change was this. Edward had begun to give way under the encroachments of a love of drink, and at every social party that he attended with them, indulged too freely. The consequence was, that they perceived it; and, therefore, their spirits were always depressed on such occasions. But at your wedding, there was no wine, and their spirits instantly rose under the influence of the happy sphere around them. I then saw Eleanor as she really was, and loved her. And this is not all. Adeline attracted our friend Lee's attention on that same night. Nor is this all—Edward Whiteman was led by some remarks of his sister in reference to the wedding, to see his true condition, and

utterly to renounce all intoxicating drinks as a beverage. He then had power to win the heart of dear little cousin Mary—or rather, was now able to obtain the heart already his own. It will be long, very long, Harry, before any of us forget your cold-water wedding.”



Two Scenes in the Life of a City Belle.

TWO SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A CITY BELLE.

SCENE FIRST.

"ISN'T she a glorious creature?" said my young friend Merwyn, glancing, as he spoke, toward a beautiful girl named Florine Malcolm, the daughter of a merchant reputed to be rich. We were at a party, and the object of remark sat, or rather reclined near us on a sofa, with a graceful abandon, or rather indolence, in her whole air and attitude, that indicated one born and raised in idleness and luxury.

"She is a fine looking girl, certainly," I replied.

"Fine looking!" said my enthusiastic young friend, in surprise, half inclined to be offended at the coldness with which I expressed myself. "Fine looking, indeed! She's a perfect Hebe; a very impersonation of youth and beauty."

"No one can deny that she is a very lovely and beautiful girl," said I, to this. "But she lacks animation."

"What you speak of as a fault, I consider her greatest charm. I never met any one so free from all vulgar hurry and excitement. An exquisite ease distinguishes her actions, and she reminds you, in nearly every thing, of those courtly ladies who give such a charm to foreign aristocratic society. Certainly, I have not met, in this country, with any one who has so perfectly the air of a high-bred lady as Florine Malcolm."

To understand this, perfectly, the reader must be told that Merwyn had recently returned from a tour through Europe, whither he had been permitted to go by a wealthy

father, and where he had discovered, like most of our young men who venture abroad, that in our forms of social intercourse, and in all that gives fashionable society its true excellence and attractiveness, we are sadly deficient. Foreign manners, habits, and dress were brought home and retained by the young man; who, as a natural consequence, became a favourite among our ladies, and was thus encouraged in his silly imitations of things anti-American, and therefore in America ridiculous. In the eye of sober-minded, sensible people, who did not know him well enough to see that there was a more substantial groundwork in his character than all this would lead a casual observer to infer, Merwyn was viewed as a mere fop, whose brains had grown out upon his upper lip in the shape of a moustache.

Such a man was my friend, Henry Merwyn. I knew his better qualities, and esteemed them; at the same time that I saw his weaknesses, and bore with them for the sake of the good that was in him. He had been raised in a sickly atmosphere, and his mind had taken an unhealthy tone; but he was honourable, and rigidly just in all his actions toward others.

As for the young lady he so warmly admired—Miss Florine Malcolm—I only knew her as we know those into whose society we are but occasionally thrown. She was a fine, showy girl, with a face of more than ordinary beauty; but, to one of my taste, uninteresting for the very reason that she proved so charming to Merwyn. This genteel languor, this elegant indolence, this distinguishing repose, never much suited my fancy: I like to see the soul flow into the bodily organism, and thrill its every nerve with life and sentiment. I like to see the eye burn, the lips quiver, and the whole face glow with animating thought. These make beauty tenfold more beautiful; and give to even plainness a charm.

"By a high-bred lady," I replied to Merwyn's particular praise of Miss Malcolm, "you mean, I presume, a woman who is entirely artificial."

"No," he quickly answered, "you put a construction on my words that I do not acknowledge to be fair. By a high-bred lady, I mean one who possesses that peculiar ease

and grace, that exquisite repose, and that charming elegance of manner that comes from a refined taste and long association with those who move in the highest rank in society. In fact, it is hard to fix in words all that goes to make up a well-bred lady; but, when you meet her, you know her at a glance."

"And you say Miss Malcolm comes nearer to the high-bred, courtly lady, than any woman it has been your fortune to meet on this side of the Atlantic?"

"She does. In Paris or London she would find herself at home in the first circles of fashion. Now just look at Miss Watson, who sits near her, bolt upright, and stiff as a post; and then observe how gracefully Florine reclines on those cushions like a very queen. There you have the exact difference between a mere vulgar girl and a true lady."

There was a difference between the two individuals thus referred to—a very marked difference. Miss Watson looked like a girl of thought and action, while the other reposed languidly among the cushions of a sofa, the very picture of indolence.

"I see nothing vulgar about Miss Watson," said I. "And I know that there is nothing vulgar about her. She is a true lady in every sense of the word."

Merwyn half vexed me by his dissenting silence.

Just then he observed that Miss Malcolm looked pale. Going over quickly to where she was, he inquired if she were not well, and learned that some particular perfume used by a lady who sat near, was so unpleasant as to make her faint. He immediately proposed that she should go into another room where were fewer persons, and get a place near one of the windows, offering his arm at the same time. She arose, and I saw her pass out slowly. She was in good health, in fact, in the very prime and vigour of young life; yet, surrounded as she was by every luxury and elegance, she had grown inactive, and felt even a small effort as burdensome. Trifling causes affected her; and she imagined a physical inability to do a thousand things that might have been done with scarce an effort.

The very sympathy and concern manifested by Merwyn,

who was the lover of Florine, made her feel that she was really indisposed; and she languidly reclined on the sofa to which he had conducted her, with the air of an invalid. Finding that she did not grow any better, Merwyn, in a little while, proposed that she should go home, and had a carriage ordered. Wandering into the apartment to which they had gone, I saw him bring her shawl, without which she could not pass into the dressing-room for fear of cold, and saw her meet the attention with a half averted face, and a want of effort, that made me feel as if I would like to have aroused her by means of the wires from an electrical battery.

"A beautiful couple they will make," said I to myself, as Florine arose and went out, leaning heavily on the arm of the young man, "to pass through the storms and over the rough places of this troublesome world. A summer breeze will be too rough for that young creature, and the odour of violets too stimulating for her nerves."

A few months subsequent to this they were married, and not long afterward I removed from the city, and did not see them again for some years. But, I learned, in the mean time, with sincere regret, that in a great "commercial crisis" through which the country passed, both of the families of this young couple had been reduced from affluence to comparative poverty. A sigh for the human summer flowers I have mentioned, was my simple response to the news. A couple of years afterward I met them again.

SCENE SECOND.

During a journey through the western part of Ohio, I had occasion to stop for a few days in the little town of R—. On the day after my arrival, a man whose face struck me as being familiar, passed the door of the tavern in which I was standing. A sort of doubtful recognition took place on both sides, but neither of us being certain as to the other's identity, we did not speak, and the man passed on. I looked after him as he moved down the street, wondering in my mind who he could be, when I saw him stop, and after appearing to hesitate about something, turn around and walk back toward the hotel. He

was a young man, plainly dressed, and looked as if he were clerk in a store, or, it might be, a small store-keeper himself. As he came back, I fixed my eyes upon his face, trying to make out who it was that bore such familiar features.

"My old friend Merwyn!" I exclaimed, as he paused in front of where I stood.

He called my name in return, and then we grasped each other's hands eagerly.

"The last man in the world I expected to meet," said I.

"And, certainly, I as little expected to meet you," was returned. "This is indeed a pleasure! When did you arrive, and how long do you stay in R——?"

"I came here yesterday, and hope to resume my journey to-morrow."

"Not so soon!" Merwyn said, still tightly holding my hand. "You must stay longer."

"I am doubtful as to that," I returned. "But is this your place of sojourn in the world?"

"Yes, for the present, seeing that I can't find a better."

There was a manly cheerfulness in the way this was said, which I could not have believed it possible for the young man to feel, under the great change of circumstances that had taken place.

"And your lady?" I felt some hesitation even while I asked this question.

"Very well, thank you!" was cheerfully replied. "We live a mile or two from town, and you must go out and spend a night with us before you leave. Florine will be delighted to see you."

"It will be quite as pleasant for me to meet her," I could but answer; yet even while I spoke I felt that our meeting must remind the wife of my friend so strongly of the past, as to make it any thing but pleasant.

"How long have you lived here?"

"About two years."

"It is almost the last place in which I expected to meet you. What are you doing?"

"Merchandizing in a small way. I had no profession, when kind fortune knocked us all on the head, and so had to turn my hand to the first thing that offered, which hap-

pened to be a clerkship in a store at three hundred and fifty dollars a year. This was barely enough to keep body and soul together; yet I was thankful for so much, and tried to keep down a murmuring spirit. At the end of a year, having given every satisfaction to my employer, he said to me one day—‘You have shown far more business capacity than I thought you possessed, and, I think, are the very man I want to go out West with a stock of goods. Can you command any capital?’ ‘Not a dollar, I fear,’ was my reply. ‘I’m sorry for that,’ said he, ‘for I want a man who is able to take an interest in the business. Don’t you think you could raise a couple of thousand dollars in cash?’ I shook my head doubtfully. We had a good deal more conversation on the subject.

“When I went home, I mentioned to my wife what Mr. L——, my employer, had said, and we talked much about the proposition. I expressed a great deal of regret at not being able to furnish capital, as the offer I had received was plainly an advantageous one, and would give me a fair start in the world. ‘Would you be willing to go off to the West?’ I asked of Florine, while we talked over the subject. ‘Wherever you think it best to go, I will go cheerfully,’ was her brave answer. Thus far she had borne our change of fortune with a kind of heroism that more than any thing else helped to sustain me. We were living with my family, and had one child. My father, of whose misfortunes you are aware, had obtained the office of president in an insurance company, with a salary of two thousand a year, and this enabled him still to keep his family around him, and, though luxuries had to be given up, his income afforded every comfort. We had a room with them, and, though my income was small, we had all that health and peace of mind required.

“On the day after the conversation with my wife about the West, she met me on coming home to dinner, with so happy, yet meaning a smile on her face, that I could not help inquiring what it meant. As I sat down by her side, she drew from her pocket a small roll of bank bills, and, handing them to me, said—‘There is the capital you want.’ I took the money, and unrolling it in mute surprise, counted out the sum of two thousand dollars!

‘Where did this come from?’ I inquired. She glanced across the room, and my eyes followed the direction hers had taken. I missed something. It was her piano! ‘Explain yourself, Florine,’ I said. ‘That is easily done,’ she replied, as she looked tenderly in my face. ‘I have sold my piano and watch, my diamond pin, bracelet and ring, and every article of jewelry and *bijouterie* in my possession, but *this*,’ holding up the wedding ring, ‘and there you have the money.’ I cannot tell you how much I was affected by this. But, no matter. I used the two thousand dollars in the way proposed, and here I am. Come, walk down to my store with me, and let us chat a little about old times, there.”

I went, as invited, and found Merwyn with a small, but well selected stock of goods in his store, and all the evidences of a thriving business around him.

“You must go home with me this afternoon,” said he, as I arose to leave him, after having had an agreeable talk for an hour. “I live, as I told you, a short distance in the country; so you will stay all night, and can come in with me in the morning. The stage leaves here at five o’clock, and passes within a short distance of my house. Florine will be delighted to see you.”

I consented, well pleased with this arrangement, and, at five o’clock was seated in the stage by the side of my old friend, who bore as little resemblance to one of your curled, perfumed, and moustached exquisites—what he had once been—as could well be imagined. His appearance was plain, substantial, and business-like.

Half an hour’s ride brought us to our stopping-place.

“I live off to the right here,” said Merwyn, as we left the stage, “beyond that piece of wood. Ten minutes’ walk will bring us to my door. We prefer the country for several reasons, the principal one of which is economy. Our cottage, with six acres of ground, costs us only fifty dollars a year, and we have the whole of the land worked on shares by a neighbour; thus more than clearing our rent. Then we have plenty of fruit and milk for ourselves and children, and fresh air and health into the bargain.”

“But don’t Mrs. Merwyn find it very lonesome out here?” I inquired.

“Oh, no. We have two children, and they, with a very clever young woman who lives with us more as a friend than a domestic, although we pay her wages, give Florine plenty of society through the day, and I come in by night-fall, and sometimes earlier, to make the evenings all she could wish. At least, I have Florine’s own declaration for this.” The last sentence was uttered with a smile.

As we walked along, the nearness of my meeting with Mrs. Merwyn turned my thoughts back to other times. A beautiful girl was before me, languidly reclining on a sofa, overcome by the extract of some sweet herbs, the perfume of which had fallen unharmoniously upon the sense. A hot-house plant, how was it possible that she could bear the cold, bracing atmosphere of such a life as that she was now living? When last I saw her, she was but a tender summer flower, on whom the warm sun shone daily, and into whose bosom the night dews came softly with refreshing coolness.

Silently I walked along, with my mind full of such thoughts, when an opening in the woods through which we were passing, gave me a glimpse of a woman’s figure, standing on the second rail of a fence, and apparently on the look-out for some one. The intervening trees quickly hid her again from my view. In a minute or so afterward we emerged from the trees but a short distance from the woman I had seen, who was looking in another direction from that in which we were coming. We were close upon her before she observed us. Then the voice of Merwyn, who called “Florine!” startled her, and she turned upon us her beautiful young face, glowing with health, surprise and pleasure. I paused in astonishment. Was that the indolent, languid city belle, who could scarcely sit erect even with the aid of cushions, now standing firm and straight on a fence-rail, and looking more lovely and graceful than she had ever seemed in my eyes?

She recognised me in a moment, and, springing from the rail, came bounding toward me, full to overflowing of life and spirits. Grasping my hand, she expressed the warmest pleasure at seeing an old face, and asked me a dozen questions before I could answer one.

I found them occupying a neat little bird’s-nest of a

cottage, in which were two as sweet little children as I have ever seen. While I sat and talked with Merwyn, holding one child upon my knee, and he the other, Florine busied herself in getting the supper. Her only domestic was away. Ever and anon I caught a glimpse of her as she passed in and out of the adjoining room where she had spread the table. A very long time did not elapse before I sat down with my old friends to a meal that I enjoyed as well as any I have ever eaten. The warm, white biscuits were baked by Florine; the sweet butter she had herself churned, so she said, and the cakes and preserves were her own.

"I am surprised at all this," said I, after tea. "How is it possible for you to be cheerful and happy under such a change? How was it possible for you to come so efficiently into a mode of life, the very antipodes of the one to which you were born, and in which you were educated?"

"Misfortune," replied Merwyn, "brings out whatever is efficient in our characters. This has been particularly the case with us. We had both led artificial lives, and had false views of almost every thing, when at a blow the golden palace in which we had lived was dashed in pieces. We were then thrown out into the world, with nothing to depend upon but our individual resources, which were, at first, you may well believe, exceedingly small. The suddenness with which our fashionable friends turned from us, and the entire exclusion from fashionable society that followed, opened our eyes to the utter worthlessness of much that we had looked upon as of primary consideration. The necessity of our circumstances turned our thoughts, at the same time, to things of real moment, the true importance of which grew daily more apparent. Thus we were prepared for other steps that had to be taken, and which, I am glad to say, we were able to take cheerfully. We now lead a true and useful life; and I am sure Florine will join me in saying that it is a happier life than we ever led before."

"Yes, with all my heart," replied the young wife. "I have good health, good spirits, and a clear conscience; and without these no one can be happy."

"Still," remarked Merwyn, "we look to growing better

off in the world, and hope, one day, to be surrounded by at least a portion of the elegance and luxury of early times. But until that day comes, we will enjoy the good things of life that fall to our lot ; and should it never come, we will have lost nothing by vain anticipations."

When I parted with my old friends on the next day, I felt that their lot was, beyond comparison, more blessed than it would have been had not misfortune visited them ; and wished, from my heart, that all who had met with similar reverses would imitate their good example. Still, I wondered at the change I had seen ; and, at times, could hardly realize its truth.

THE END.





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